

PAUL TILLICH AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

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by  
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E. Munroe Trotter

To my son Jerome Benjamin Harrison

## PREFACE

This study of the relationship between the thought of Paul Tillich and psychotherapy is the fulfillment of an interest that has long stimulated me. One who is interested in both theology and psychology will almost inevitably become interested in Paul Tillich. The depth and breadth of his thought is a continuous source of insight to anyone who wants to understand man. To make a study of the relationship between his thought and psychotherapy is particularly gratifying.

I should like to thank Howard Clinebell, Donald Rhoades, Frank Kimper, David Eitzen, and Floyd Ross of the School of Theology at Claremont for their help in various parts of this project. I should like to thank Merle Jordan and Carroll Wright of the Pastoral Counseling Service of the Los Angeles Baptist City Missionary Society for supervision of my own counseling procedures; which supervision helped me to clarify many of the insights stimulated by the study.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Ask a psychotherapist about his psychological orientation and he is likely to say that he is eclectic. Or perhaps he will say that he is Freudian (or Jungian or Adlerian, etc.), then explain that he also borrows freely from other schools. This eclectic tendency is so strong that therapists who stick too closely to one approach are likely to be looked upon as being cultish.

The fact is that there probably is no school or system of therapy that has proven itself adequate in explaining all the phenomena that meet the therapist as he tries to help the troubled person who sits before him in the counseling room. At least no school has proven convincing enough to win a strong loyalty from an overwhelming majority of psychotherapists.

This inadequacy has spawned disagreement, confusion and the creating of new schools almost from the beginning of modern psychotherapy. Adler criticized Freud for not recognizing the teleological nature of symptoms. Jung tried to reconcile the difference by saying that Freud saw life from an object oriented stance while Adler saw it from a subject oriented stance. But Jung had his own criticisms of Freud--primarily, he criticized Freud for identifying

libido with sex. He insisted that libido had wider connotations than that. Horney, and others, insisted that even with wider connotations the libido concept was inadequate. She saw neuroses arising as a result of interpersonal relationships. Fromm went beyond the immediate relationships to take into consideration the cultural context in which the neuroses developed.

In the last few years educators with their theories about how people learn, experimental psychologists with the operant conditioning approaches they learned from running rats through the mazes, and social workers with their manipulation of the environment have also come into the picture. The clergy have entered the field more as borrowers than as contributors.

Adding to the confusion is the fact that all of these systems "work." But none works well enough to be satisfactory for all purposes.

#### 1. THE PRIEST AND THE MEDICINE MAN

The diversity of approaches is not a problem. It is to be expected that attempts to deal with the troubled heart of man would result in a multiplicity of approaches. The problem is that there seems to be no unity in the diversity, there seems to be no unifying thread the therapist can follow as he picks his way through the systems looking for a way to help the sufferer who has come to him

for healing. The result is confusion rather than diversity.

The confusion is there because a unity which once was is no more. In the days when the ancestors of our western civilization were primitive tribesmen, the medicine man was likely to be the priest as well. As medicine man, he represented the scientific wisdom of his day, while as priest he represented that part of life which is covered today by such terms as theology and philosophy.

This happy unity no longer exists on a widespread scale. The modern break came when the European intellectuals of the late 17th and the 18th centuries became aware of their opposition to religious domination.

In the salons of eighteenth-century Paris and the French provinces, in the masonic lodges and the coffee houses, the talk was of machines and social engineering, of natural laws and education and progress. To be sure, the philosophes did not have things all their own way. The upholders of the old faith fought a stubborn rear-guard action, and in the course of the century the "romantics" managed to mount a limited offensive against the Enlightenment. But the philosophes represented the wave of the future, and to the degree that historical periodization is ever valid, we can say that under their leadership the West definitely moved into the Age of Science.<sup>1</sup>

One result of all this was a struggle between religionists who did not care to have their security shaken and scientists who did not care to be shackled any longer.

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<sup>1</sup>Franklin L. Baumer, Main Currents of Western Thought (New York: Knopf, 1952), pp. 357-8.

The scientists were determined to go their own way--and did so. This antagonism, plus the eventual predominance of science, gave shape to the modern disunity between the descendents of the medicine man-priest.

Unfortunately, the scientist in his zeal to be free of shackles became what Barth calls the absolute man.

'Absolutism' in general can obviously mean a system of life based upon the belief in the omnipotence of human powers. Man, who discovers his own power and ability, the potentiality dormant in his humanity, that is, his human being as such, and looks upon it as the final, the real and absolute, I mean as something 'detached', self-justifying, with its own authority and power, which he can therefore set in motion in all directions and without any restraint--this man is absolute man.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, man who sees himself as absolute is seeing an illusion. He thinks that his concepts are a true description of reality when, in fact, they are a description of reality as filtered through and distorted by his own needs and prejudices. It is interesting to read some of the scientific ethical principles that were written by some of the enthusiastic absolute men of the eighteenth century. A set of "universal" ethical principles by a Frenchman turns out to be somewhat different from a set of "universal" ethical principles by an Englishman. Furthermore, the difference can be pretty well traced to the differences between French and English cultures. Furthermore, the difference between sets of "universal" principles

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<sup>2</sup>Karl Barth, Protestant Thought From Rousseau to Ritschl (New York: Harper & Bros., 1959), p. 14.

written by two Frenchmen tend to differ according to their own personal backgrounds.

A contemporary illustration of this problem can be seen in almost any cocktail party argument on politics. The persons on each side of the argument will likely insist that they are arguing from "universal" principles. But if they enunciate their principles sufficiently differences will begin to appear. One who knows the persons well enough will not find it hard to see the connection between the principles held by a given individual and that individual's vested interests, emotional and otherwise.

This weakness of human nature is involved in the disagreements between psychotherapists. Look at Freud as an example:

A significant set of influences entered his life at this point when he began to study in Brucke's Institute of Physiology. Brucke was a member of an outstanding group of men, including Helmholtz, who set out to destroy vitalism in physiology. It seems likely that Freud's deterministic position and his belief in scientific knowledge as the prime solution to the world's ills were shaped under Brucke, whom he greatly admired.<sup>3</sup>

The fact that Freud's position on these matters is not universally accepted is not due to the fact that other thinkers are stupid. It is due rather to the fact that they were not heavily influenced by Brucke's Institute of Physiology.

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<sup>3</sup>Donald H. Ford and Hugh B. Urban, Systems of Psychotherapy (New York: Wiley & Sons, 1963), p. 111.

A similar position is held by Karen Horney concerning Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex.

Finding no traces of the Oedipus complex in the majority of healthy adults, Freud assumed that in these persons the complex had been successfully repressed, a conclusion which, as McDougal has already pointed out, is not convincing to those who do not share Freud's belief in the biological nature of the complex.<sup>4</sup>

Freud is not the only psychotherapist whose theories reflect individual but not necessarily universal experiences or prejudices. It has been pointed out that Adler's theories were influenced by his severe childhood sickness. It has also been pointed out that not everybody goes through a severe childhood sickness. Thus, not everybody's problem centers on inferiority.

The influence of individual biases in systems of psychotherapy explains why all the systems work while no system alone works well enough.

## 2. THE NEED FOR AN ONTOLOGY

There is no escape from these personal biases. Nor should there be. A therapist's personal background, his peculiar vision of life is one of the sources of his particular value as a therapist. The need is for the therapist with his personal vision to be in dialogue with life as it is so that he might hear the yes's and the no's it says to him. In this way the distortions in his

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<sup>4</sup>Karen Horney, M.D., New Ways in Psychoanalysis (New York: Norton, 1939), p. 79.

viewpoint can be partially corrected and the viewpoint itself can be enlarged.

Of course, each psychotherapist tends to think he is in dialogue with life as it is when he counsels with the person who sits before him. The problem is that his personal viewpoint gives him certain assumptions about the nature of man and the nature of the conflict in which man finds himself--and he sees the person with whom he is counseling in the light of these assumptions. What is needed is for him to question those assumptions.

As Rollo May puts it in describing the dissatisfaction that has caused many therapists to turn to existentialism:

It was not with specific techniques of therapy that these psychiatrists and psychologists took issue. They recognize, for example, that psychoanalysis is valid for certain types of cases, and some of them, bona fide members of the Freudian movement, employ it themselves. But they all had grave doubts about its theory of man. And they believed these difficulties and limitations in the concept of man not only seriously blocked research but would in the long run also seriously limit the effectiveness and development of therapeutic techniques. They sought to understand the particular neuroses or psychoses and, for that matter, any human being's crisis situation, not as deviations from the conceptual yardstick of this or that psychiatrist or psychologist who happened to be observing, but as deviations in the structure of that particular patient's existence, the disruption of his condition humaine.<sup>5</sup>

What is needed then is that the psychotherapist's assumptions about the nature of man and of his conflict be

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<sup>5</sup>Rollo May (ed.), Existence (New York: Basic Books, 1958), p. 5.



arrived at in self-conscious struggle instead of being arrived at because he just happened to study at Brucke's Institute of Physiology or because he just happened to go through a serious illness as a child. What is needed, in other words, is for the therapist to study ontology as well as psychology.

It is the purpose of this study to consider some of the ontological insights of Paul Tillich and some of their relationships to psychotherapy. It is assumed in the study that, for ontological concepts to be of value to a psychotherapist, they must clarify the relationships between various schools of psychotherapy by pointing out the underlying unity. In doing this the assumptions about the nature of man and his conflict made by the various schools can be challenged and discarded so long as their practical value as therapeutic systems is not endangered. It is also assumed that the ontological concepts must have a validity of their own which can be demonstrated with clinical material.

If Dr. Tillich's ontological insights can meet these two requirements they can serve as criteria for the use of the psychotherapist as he picks his way through the various schools in search of those insights that will best help the troubled heart of the person who has come to him for healing.

Part I of the study will set forth a summary of Tillich's basic insights as they apply to psychotherapy. Part II will discuss the relationship between Tillich's thought and several representative schools of psychotherapy. Part III will demonstrate the clinical validity of Tillich's theories by the use of case material to illustrate those theories.

## PART I

### CHAPTER II

#### MAN AS HE ESSENTIALLY IS

In order to understand the relationship between Paul Tillich's concepts and counseling, it is necessary to understand what Tillich means when he writes about man as he essentially is (and ought to be) as opposed to man as he actually is in existential estrangement. It will be the purpose of this chapter to outline briefly Tillich's description of man as he essentially is.

##### 1. THE ONTOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

Man must be seen in terms of the basic ontological structure of self and world. This is something different from having an environment. "The world is the structural whole which includes and transcends all environments . . ."<sup>1</sup> Because man has a world he is not limited completely by his environment (unless he has lost his humanity through intoxication or insanity). He is able to transcend it by "grasping it and shaping it according to universal norms and ideas. Even in the most limited environment man possesses the universe; he has a world."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), I, 170.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

And when he sees himself he sees himself as a part of his world. This makes it possible for him to have a relationship with himself.

The polarities that follow must be seen as expressions of this polarity of self and world.

### Individualization and Participation

Man is a centered self. Dr. Tillich uses the analogy of a geometrical point which cannot be divided. The point is a unit and is indivisible. So is the self. It cannot be assimilated by another self; it can be destroyed in its encounter with the other self, but it cannot be assimilated.

In this connection it is significant that the biblical view of man is not that of an example of some universal idea. He is seen rather as a person.

This biblical view is a reflection of ontological reality, a reality that no one successfully ignores.

Even in collectivistic societies the individual as the bearer and, in the last analysis, the aim of the collective is significant rather than the species. Even the most despotic state claims to exist for the benefit of its individual subjects.<sup>3</sup>

This bedrock fact is a useful insight to serve as a boundary for those psychological orientations that tend to see psychological health and sickness as a result of interpersonal relationships. The very valuable insights derived

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., I, 175.

from a study of interpersonal relationships should never lead to the conclusion that the individual is a "product" of these relationships. It is true that the individual does not exist apart from his relations with other people but he does exist in polarity with his participation in the relationships. He is not synonymous with his relationships.

And, in fact, his relationships with other people are not synonymous with participation. Man participates in the entire universe through his knowledge and reason. He participates, through religious symbols, in the power of that which the symbols symbolize. Seen this way man is always participating.

This is true even of indifference or hostility. Nothing can make one hostile in which one does not somehow participate, perhaps in the form of being excluded from it. And nothing can produce the attitude of indifference whose existence has not made some difference to one.<sup>4</sup>

His relationships with other people are the only area in which he participates fully. In this area he can have communion. In fact, he must have such communion.

No individual exists without participation, and no personal being exists without communal being. The person as the fully developed individual self is impossible without other fully developed selves. If he did not meet the resistance of other selves, every self would try to make himself absolute. But the resistance of the other selves is unconditional. One individual can conquer the entire world of objects, but he cannot conquer another person without destroying him as a person. The individual discovers himself through this resistance. If he does not want to destroy the other person, he must enter into communion with him. In the

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., I, 177.

resistance of the other person the person is born. Therefore, there is no person without an encounter with other persons. Persons can grow only in the communion of personal encounter. Individualization and participation are interdependent on all levels of being.<sup>5</sup>

### Dynamics and Form

In this polarity dynamics is that potentiality which has not yet taken form. It is that which drives toward its own fulfillment even at the cost of change in the structures of the person's life. It is here that Tillich places the unconscious.

And the 'unconscious' of Hartman and Freud is not a 'room' which can be described as though it were a cellar filled with things which once belonged to the upper rooms in which the sun of consciousness shines. The unconscious is mere potentiality, and it should not be painted in the image of the actual. The other descriptions of 'that which does not yet have being' must be interpreted in the same way, that is, analogically.<sup>6</sup>

Man experiences dynamics as vitality--the creative drive toward new forms.

He experiences form as intentionality. By this Tillich means "living in tension with (and toward) something objectively valid."<sup>7</sup> It is this that keeps man's vitality from being chaotic and undirected. The intentionality directs it and shapes it toward a meaningful goal.

Form never exists apart from dynamics and dynamics never exists apart from form. Consequently life moves

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., I, 176.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., I, 179.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., I, 180.

toward the actualization of potential even when this means the alteration of old structures. But, life also conserves part of the old structures so that there is a continuity at the same time there is change. Conservation and creative change are both included in the structure of life--neither of them destroying the other.

### Freedom and Destiny

The third polarity is a bit surprising to many people because we are accustomed to seeing freedom contrasted with necessity rather than with destiny. Tillich says, however, that the contrast of necessity is possibility, not freedom. If one speaks of freedom, therefore, he must place it in polarity with destiny.

Freedom is experienced by the person as deliberation over the trends, motives and other factors involved in a decision. It is further experienced as the making of the decision--the cutting off of those possibilities that are not chosen and the commitment of one's centered self to the possibilities that are chosen. Finally, it is experienced as responsibility for the decision made. Thus, the decision maker is required to answer for his decision if he is called upon to do so.

Destiny has to do with that out of which our decisions are made. It is not to be confused with fate which is simply a contradiction to freedom. Destiny is something

other than a contradiction to freedom. It has to do more with the limitations of it. It is the drives, the bodily structure, the accumulated results of past decisions, the economic, political and social conditions in which one finds himself; it is, in other words, the givenness of one's life.

Within the limitations and possibilities of this givenness man exercises his freedom. He deliberates, judges and decides which possibility will be brought to fulfillment.

Freedom and destiny, like the other polarities, stand in interdependent relationship to each other. Man cannot lose one without losing the other.

## 2. THE PROBLEM OF FINITUDE

Man is finite. As such he is caught between being and nonbeing, participating in both and in their struggle with each other. Finitude is, in fact, being limited by nonbeing. "Nonbeing appears as the 'not yet' of being and as the 'no more' of being. It confronts that which is with a definite end (finis)."<sup>8</sup> Man, as he participates in being finds that he is also participating in nonbeing.

He is not necessarily aware of this at any given moment. But there are those times when nonbeing breaks through to his awareness. At these points man becomes anxious. His anxiety is the signal that he has become

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., I, 189.



aware, whether he can articulate it or not, of his possible nonbeing.

### Finitude and the Categories

This finitude is effective in all four of the categories (time, space, causality and substance) with which man understands and shapes reality.

In the category of time, for example, man experiences the transitoriness of all things, including himself. There is, to be sure, a positive element in time. It does create and bring to fulfillment, it solves problems. The popular saying that "time heals all wounds" grows out of the ordinary man's awareness of this positive element of time.

But it also brings all things to destruction. Man becomes aware of the fact that time will also bring him to destruction. All he really has is the present moment. When he becomes aware of this fact he becomes aware of his finitude.

In the category of space man is faced with the fact that there is no place he can call his own. No space belongs to him. Regardless of what he does to "make a place" for himself, through position, wealth, etc., he is faced ultimately with the fact that his place does not "belong" to him. He can lose it. This means ultimate insecurity.

In the category of causality man becomes aware of the fact that he is contingent. He does not cause himself, he is caused. And that which causes him to be can cause him not to be. He is ultimately at the mercy of that which gives him the power to be. A concrete example of this is the fact that the politician who is put into office by the approval of the voters can be put out of office by their disapproval. To be put out of office, of course, is not ultimate nonbeing--voters are not God. But the preliminary only serves to illustrate the analysis of causality--the analysis is the same when one deals with ultimate nonbeing. Furthermore, the anxiety that a politician feels is a signal that ultimate nonbeing is involved even in the preliminary.

In the category of substance man becomes aware of the fact that change might effect his identity as well as that which is accidental to him. He sees, in change, that some things were unable to resist the wear of nonbeing and were destroyed to be replaced by the new. He becomes aware of the fact that this can happen, not only to those matters which are accidental to him but, also, to his very substance--his identity.

### Finitude and the Ontological Elements

Man experiences nonbeing in connection with the ontological elements but in a way that is different from

his experience of nonbeing in connection with the categories. In the case of the categories he experiences the anxiety of nonbeing directly. In connection with the ontological elements he experiences nonbeing as the possibility of not being what he essentially is. He experiences the threat that the unity of the polarities might be disrupted and they will be in tension with each other.

Under the impact of finitude the unity between individualization and participation can be disrupted so that the person stands in danger of losing one of them (and consequently, the other).

He is in danger, on the one hand, of becoming isolated from his world in static self identity and, on the other hand, of being swallowed up by his world and losing his identity. Many psychological and sociological problems, from the collectivism of communism to the psychotic who has withdrawn into his tortured world of imagination, are expressions of the disruption of this polarity.

In the disruption of dynamics and form the person is in danger, on the one hand, of being caught up in change for the sake of change (change which is chaotic) and, on the other hand, of being bound in rigid forms that stultify his vitality.

In the disruption of freedom and destiny man is in danger of surrendering his freedom in order to preserve his

destiny. At the same time he is in danger of trying to save his freedom by defying his destiny.

Thus, does man live constantly in danger of losing his essential selfhood under the awful weight of finitude.

## CHAPTER III

### MAN AS HE EXISTENTIALLY IS

Man is not what he essentially is. He has fallen into existential estrangement in which he is cut off from the source of his being, from what he essentially is, from his real potential. In order, therefore, to understand man and his problems it is necessary to understand man as he actually is as opposed to what he essentially is.

In Tillich's Systematic Theology he makes a distinction between existential estrangement and actuality. In actuality, man is not totally estranged. Instead, his life is ambiguously mixed between essential and existential elements. Generally, however, Tillich uses the term existential estrangement to apply to man in his ambiguity. The term will be so used in this study.

#### 1. THE FALL

The fall from essence to existence is not an event that man can point to as happening at a particular time--that is, there is no time in a person's life to which one can point as being "before the fall." The term, "before the fall," points "to something that precedes actual existence. It has potentiality, not actuality. It has no place, it is ou topos (utopia). It has no time; it precedes

temporality, and it is suprahistorical."<sup>1</sup> It has to do with potentiality that is uncontested and exists only as potentiality. No decision has been made concerning its actualization.

But, since man is free he has the option of trying to actualize his potentiality. This freedom is what makes the fall possible.

At the same time, desire motivates him toward the actualization. But the combination of freedom and desire arouses tension in him. For there is also a desire to preserve himself as he is. So, he is forced to decide between the actualization of potential and the conservation of the status quo. If he actualizes himself he takes the chance on losing himself-in-his-innocence. At the same time, if he does not actualize himself he takes the chance on losing himself by losing that-which-he-could-have-been.

Tillich refers to sexuality as an illustration of this:

The typical adolescent is driven by the anxiety of losing himself, either in the actualization of himself sexually or in his non-actualization sexually. On the one hand, the taboos imposed on him by society have power over him in confirming his own anxiety about losing his innocence and becoming guilty by actualizing his potentiality. On the other hand, he is afraid of not actualizing himself sexually and of sacrificing his potentialities by preserving his innocence. He usually decides for actualization, as men universally do. Exceptions (e.g., for the sake of conscious asceticism)

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), II, 33.

limit the analogy to the human situation generally, but they do not remove the analogy.<sup>2</sup>

### The Meaning of the Fall

Man decides for actualization. In this decision he leaves his innocence behind him. Inevitably, in his self-actualization he becomes guilty. Tillich uses three terms to describe that nature of this.

The first is unbelief. This does not mean the failure to subscribe to certain dogmas. Nor does it mean that the person ceases to "have faith" or to "have enough faith" as these terms are used in popular speech. To have faith in this sense is merely to try to keep up one's courage by suppressing discouragement; while belief in the sense of subscribing to certain dogmas might mean naivete or, perhaps, the attempt to suppress doubt.

Unbelief, in the sense in which Tillich uses it is a matter of turning away from the ground of being as if it were not really the source of life for us.

And where does man turn when he turns away from God? He turns toward himself. He tries to make himself the center of his world and of his self. This is the other side of unbelief--one turns away from the ground of being and toward himself. For this Tillich uses the classical word hubris.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., II, 36.

The possibility of hubris arises out of man's dignity and greatness. It is the caricature of this dignity and greatness, it is the attempt to identify himself with God by not really acknowledging his finitude.

He identifies partial truth with ultimate truth, as, e.g., Hegel did when he claimed to have created a final system containing the whole of possible truth. --- In a similar way, people have identified their limited goodness with absolute goodness, as, for example, the Pharisees and their successors in Christianity and in secularism. Here also tragic self-destruction followed hubris, as the catastrophes of Judaism, Puritanism and bourgeois moralism have shown. And man identifies his cultural creativity with divine creativity. He attributes infinite significance to his finite cultural creations, making idols of them, elevating them into matters of ultimate concern. The divine answer to man's cultural hubris comes in the disintegration and decay of every great culture in the course of history.<sup>3</sup>

What happens in this area with regard to groups also happens in the lives of individuals.

All men have the hidden desire to be like God, and they act accordingly in their self-evaluation and self-affirmation. No one is willing to acknowledge, in concrete terms, his finitude, his weakness and his errors, his ignorance and his insecurity, his loneliness and his anxiety. And if he is ready to acknowledge them, he makes another instrument of hubris out of his readiness. A demonic structure drives man to confuse natural self-affirmation with destructive self-elevation.<sup>4</sup>

Man's reason for turning away from the ground of being and trying to center all of life upon himself is seen in the third word Tillich uses to describe the fall. The word is concupiscence and it refers to man's attempt to

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., II, 51.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



draw everything into himself for his own use and for the pursuance of his own purposes. These are the unlimited strivings for pleasure, for power, for knowledge, etc. It is important to note that it is not the strivings themselves that are the problem. To strive for pleasure, for example, is not, in itself, concupiscence. It is the unlimitedness of the strivings that make them destructive. The unlimited character of the strivings, rather than the goal of them, gives them the label concupiscence.

Here, it is instructive to consider Tillich's thinking as regards Freud's concept of libido. Freud sees libido in terms of man's desire to resolve the tensions in his life through the pleasurable discharge of energies. He has pointed out the presence of sexuality in even the religious devotion of man. He, at this point, has rediscovered insights that were familiar to the monastics--who have left us records of their struggles with their own sexuality. The recovery of these insights are of great value to theology, and Freud deserves the gratitude of theologians for bringing them, once again, to our attention.

Furthermore, from his special angle Freud has given us a good picture of the meaning of concupiscence. In his concept of the death drive (poorly translated "death instinct") Freud shows how the burden of the strivings of the never satisfied libido weighs upon man until he would like to get free from it by returning to a lower level of

living. The logical end to this drive toward the lower level is, of course, death itself. This is the only escape man sees from the unceasing demands of libido.

This is, indeed, a good description of concupiscence. However, at this point Freud's lack of an understanding of the difference between essential and existential man come into the picture. Freud sees this problem as being caused by man's nature instead of seeing it as a result of man's estrangement from his essential being. He cannot, for example, understand the relationship between sexuality and love. According to this viewpoint man wants to use the other person for the satisfaction of his own pleasure but he does not want the other person. But Tillich insists that in his essential nature man does want the other person. This interest in the other person as person acts as a limit to the drive of libido. Libido, in this case, is not concupiscence. It is simply libido.

In existential estrangement, however, libido is distorted and becomes concupiscence. It drives toward the use of the whole of life for the subject's purposes--it does not heed the command coming from the other person as a centered self, the command, that is, to limit itself at the boundaries of the other person's identity.

Freud's description of libido is the description of distorted libido. Libido as love does not fit the description. "Freud did not make this distinction because of his

puritanical attitude toward sex. . . . In comparison with a man like Luther, Freud is ascetic in his basic assumption about the nature of man."<sup>5</sup>

In his essential nature, man yearns to be united with the object of his love for the sake of being united. This is not concupiscence. It is love.

#### The Fall and the Ontological Elements

In estrangement the polarities are no longer united. In turning away from the creator (unbelief) toward himself as the center of the existential world (hubris) and trying to draw everything into himself (concupiscence) man is no longer united with his world. The common ground of their being is denied in favor of the individual's attempt to make himself his own ground.

Because of this, man and his world are at odds with each other; with the result that man is threatened constantly both by world loss and self-loss. This disunity is effective in each of the polar elements.

The Separation of Freedom and Destiny. In estrangement freedom separates itself from the contents of destiny which give freedom its limits and its meaning. It becomes arbitrary and wilfull. No criterion exists for making choices except the preference of the choosing subject, and the subject has nothing to guide him except his own

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., II, 54.

subjective feelings. One choice is essentially as good as another.

As freedom becomes distorted into arbitrariness destiny becomes distorted into compulsion. Man finds himself driven by necessities which are not necessities because of their connection with his destiny but because of his fear of world loss.

In the conflict and tensions of this polarity man finds himself pulled and pushed between arbitrariness and compulsion. He is not free. At the same time he has no sense of his own destiny.

The Separation of Dynamics and Form. Under the dominance of hubris and concupiscence the unity of dynamics and form are disrupted.

Dynamics drives without regard to an aim or a goal. There is no intention that can serve as a guide for the expression of the dynamics. So, dynamics goes aimlessly toward the new because it is new.

At the same time form becomes rigid. It is form for its own sake, form that does not yield itself to alteration by dynamics but which resists alteration. An example of this is the legalistic approach to morality that is seen in the Victorianism that is still a part of our culture. A personal example is seen in the rigidity of self-righteous persons, or of persons whom, in everyday speech, we call stubborn.

### The Separation of Individualization and Participation

Under the dominance of hubris and concupiscence the unity of individualization and participation is broken. The individual becomes shut up in himself, unable fully to participate in the world around him.

At the same time, he tends to let himself be taken over by other persons or by causes which use him as if he were an object without any identity of his own.

He is torn, then, between the loneliness that causes him to submerge himself in the collective and the fear of submergence which leads him to shut himself off from participation.

### 2. SELF-ACTUALIZATION AND AMBIGUITY

Because of the fall man lives in ambiguity. Life is an ambiguous mixture of elements of essential man and existential estrangement. This ambiguity is present in the process of actualization.

This process is a going out from the self, an alteration of the self and a returning to the self. In the going out, potential is actualized and this actualization of potential alters the self--but the identity of the self is not lost in the process. There is change in the going out but in such a way that there is also continuity of the self that changes. Thus, the going out ends with a return to the self, altered but still the same self.

The process of actualization, and the ambiguity, is effective in all three polarities of the ontological elements.

### Self-Integration and its Ambiguities

The polarity of individualization and participation involves the question of integration. The person goes out from his centered self, participates in his world, is altered somewhat by this participation, and returns to his centeredness. He is changed somewhat but without loss of identity. When the person is able to remain an individual, that is, when he is able to maintain his centeredness and, at the same time, participate in his world he is integrated. He assimilates into his own center those parts of the world in which he participates.

If he is not able to do this he suffers from disintegration.

Tillich illustrates this by pointing to the nature of disease. He says that much disease is caused by the inability of the organism to assimilate into its identity the strange elements in which it is participating. At the same time, it cannot eject these elements. So, it disintegrates under the impact of the alien elements. This is particularly the case, of course, with infectious diseases.

On the other hand, if the organism fails to participate, if it tries to rest in its established identity, it

disintegrates because of the loss of participation. Note what happens, for example, when an arm is not used for awhile. It begins to wither.

It must be said, then, that in regard to the polarity of individualization and participation there are forces driving toward self-alteration and those driving toward self-identity. If these are in balance the person is integrated. To the extent that they are out of balance--to that extent the person disintegrates. In other words, self-alteration and self-identity are the two ways in which the life process works in this polarity. The person's integration depends on whether this process works successfully.

The pattern that has been described in connection with physical diseases applies also to the psychological sphere. Psychologically, the person can find himself unable to assimilate an overpowering number of impressions. Or he can find impressions too intense to assimilate. Under the impact of such overwhelming impressions the psychological self tends to disintegrate in the same way the body disintegrates under the impact of infection.

The same thing happens if the person is pulled in too many ways or in contradictory ways by the impressions. This is frequently seen in the case of a person who does not know what he wants. He cannot decide because he is attracted to so many different things or because he feels so many

different demands upon him. He tries to satisfy all demands or take in all the things to which he is attracted. Disintegration results.

On the other hand, if the person is dominated by his fear of losing himself, he, more and more, shuts himself off from stimuli to prevent self-alteration. The result is a dead identity, and disintegration.

Because of the nature of this problem the person must sacrifice. He must decide again and again whether to sacrifice the real for the possible or the possible for the real. Furthermore, if he decides for the possible he still must decide among the various possibilities offered him. This sometimes brings out a conflict of values in which he finds it necessary to sacrifice one or several values in order to actualize the one value which is most important to him.

Before leaving this subject it is necessary to mention the connection between all this and interpersonal relationships. It has been said already that a person cannot assimilate the center of another person. The personal center cannot be assimilated. It is separate and remains separate. It can be destroyed but it cannot be assimilated.

Nevertheless, man can participate in the center of another person and be altered through this participation. It is the self-alteration that he assimilates in this



experience. This example, illustrates what is meant by assimilation of other parts of his world as well. Assimilation does not consist in the absorption of the world but in the self-alteration that comes from the impact of the world.

This difference points to the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationship. In unhealthy relationships the self accepts into himself those parts of the other person's personality which are congenial to him. In other words, those parts that do not call upon him to change--those parts that he can use. In genuine love the person participates in the center of the other person regardless of whether their personalities "fit."

#### Self-creativity and its Ambiguities

In the polarity of dynamics and form the life process works between self-creativity and self-destruction. In self-creativity new centers of the self are created and the self moves from one center to another in a process of growth.

This can, perhaps, be understood through Erik Erikson's stages of growth. In the late teens, for example, the person begins to move from being centered on the issue of identity to being centered on the issue of intimacy. The person who cannot make this change in centers cannot grow.

For the teenager to begin making this change, a change that becomes effective in a new center in his years between 20 and 30, he must give up his old forms for the sake of new forms. This might mean leaving his home to go to work or to go to college. In either case the old form of his life, living with his parents, being directed in part by them, gives way under the pressure of dynamics to a form in which he lives alone or with a roommate his own age (eventually with a spouse) and makes his own decisions. As Tillich points out, "there is a moment of chaos between the old and the new form, a moment of no-longer-form and not-yet-form."<sup>6</sup> There is anxiety at this point and the person might very well go back to the old form whether with his family or with a substitute (the church, a cause, a neurotically symbiotic relationship with someone who treats him like his parents treated him) and resist any further change.

In this case chaos enters the picture again under the pressure of dynamics which refuses to be satisfied with the old form. An example of this can be seen in the picture of a young person who leaves the home of his parents and, then, tries to return. If the relationships between him and his parents are good they try to recapture the "way it used to be." But it is never the same again.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., III, 50.

This struggle between dynamics and form in the life process of growth and destruction is effective in all areas of life--one's image of himself, his relationships with other people, his vocation, his values. Whether one's life is creative or destructive depends upon whether the elements of chaos or of creativity are prevalent.

### Self-transcendence and Its Ambiguities

In the polarity of freedom and destiny the life process expresses itself in self-transcendence and profanization.

These are not empirically observable as is the case with self-creativity versus self-destruction and self-integration versus self-disintegration. Self-transcendence can be seen only in man's awareness. He becomes aware of the dignity and holiness of all things when he sees them as representing ultimate being.

It is in man's deliberating and deciding while being in close relationship with his destiny that he becomes aware of his own greatness and, thus, the greatness of all of life. In his deliberating and deciding he is a subject acting with intentionality according to his own ultimate concern. His inviolability, his being in the image of God becomes obvious to him.

This can be seen in clinical practice in the sense of worth, the increased self-respect, that always comes

when a person is able to exercise his freedom in the interest of what is really important to him. This sometimes involves getting out from under the domination of another person, sometimes it means getting out from under the domination of a concern that the person had tried to make ultimate but that was not, in actual fact, ultimate. In either case, the increased sense of dignity demonstrates what Tillich is describing.

On the other hand, to become merely an object--of someone else's evaluation (even though it is favorable), of one's own evaluation, of some other person or cause that demands one's allegiance without regard to one's own ultimate concern--to be laughed at, looked at, used, causes humiliation and pain. The person who cooperates with the attempt to make him an object in this manner loses his sense of dignity.

There is also a sense of emptiness involved in the attempt of a person to commit himself to concerns that are not ultimate. In trying to combat such a sense of emptiness man stands in danger of coming under the sway of the demonic.

Thus we are faced by two opposite dangers: on the one hand, what we may call secularization (although I still prefer "profanization")--a process of becoming more and more empty or materialistic without any

ultimate concern; and on the other hand, demonization, which makes one particular religious symbol, group, usage, world view--or whatever--absolute.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. CONCLUSION

Tillich's description of the ambiguity of existential man is his description of man as he is throughout his lifetime. There is no point in a person's life when this ambiguity is not present. The experiences of reconciliation with his essential nature are fragmentary--always mixed somewhat with his existential fallenness.

Thus, man stands constantly in danger of self-disintegration, self-destruction and self-profanization. Since it is his response to nonbeing, experienced as finitude, that places him in this predicament, the biggest question of his life is the question of how it is possible to respond to nonbeing in such a way as to affirm himself--resulting in self-integration, self-creativity and self-transcendence.

The question of self-negation or self-affirmation in the face of nonbeing is the chief conflict of man's life.

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<sup>7</sup>Paul Tillich, Ultimate Concern (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 5.

## CHAPTER IV

### BEING AND NONBEING

At any given moment when a man faces the necessity of deciding whether to affirm or negate himself he does so as a man who is already ambiguously related to his essential nature--related and, yet, estranged. This is the permanent condition of his life (a condition that is overcome only fragmentarily).

He came to this condition under the impact of finitude. And that impact still weighs upon him when he, at this moment, must decide for or against self-affirmation. In order to understand what is involved in that decision it is necessary, at this point, to understand how he experiences the impact of finitude.

#### 1. EXPERIENCING NONBEING

Finitude is being, limited by nonbeing. "Nonbeing appears as the "not yet" of being and as the "no more" of being. It confronts that which is with a definite end (finis)."<sup>1</sup> When a man experiences his finitude he experiences both the being and the nonbeing.

The awareness of nonbeing creates anxiety. It is not an intellectual or theoretical knowledge of nonbeing that is

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1951), I, 189.

meant here. One might agree that everyone dies and not be at all concerned about the matter. But if, through being in an accident or losing someone near, the person realizes that the fact of death is not something remote, but that it is his destiny, that he will die and that he might die even at this moment, he becomes existentially aware of his possible nonbeing. To say that he is existentially aware is to say that he is aware of death as his death; furthermore, he is aware of this, not only in his intellect but in his emotions, his imagination, his bodily reactions--his whole being.

When man becomes existentially aware of nonbeing he becomes anxious. This anxiety, to be understood, must be distinguished from fear. Fear is felt when man faces an object that he sees as threatening to him. This object "can be faced, analyzed, attacked, endured. One can act upon it, and in acting upon it participate in it--even if in the form of struggle. In this way one can take it into one's self-affirmation."<sup>2</sup>

But what does one do when there is nothing to be struggled with, or attacked or analyzed. There is the threat of danger but nothing one can do about it.

Helplessness in the state of anxiety can be observed in animals and humans alike. It expresses itself in loss of direction, inadequate reactions, lack of 'intentionality' (the being related to meaningful

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., I, 36.

contents of knowledge or will). The reason for this sometimes striking behavior is the lack of an object on which the subject (in the state of anxiety) can concentrate. The only object is the threat itself, but not the source of the threat, because the source of the threat is 'nothingness'.<sup>3</sup>

It should not be assumed that it is only the fact that the source of the threat is unknown that causes the person who experiences it to be anxious rather than afraid. It is the nothingness, the nonbeing behind the threat that creates anxiety. The source, therefore, is unknown because it cannot be known. It is nonbeing.

This difference between anxiety and fear does not change the fact they are interrelated. "They are immanent within each other: The sting of fear is anxiety, and anxiety strives toward fear."<sup>4</sup> Fear is the awareness of the danger of some specific threat--a loss, a rejection, a failure--while anxiety is the awareness of the implications of the threat. The example Tillich uses to illustrate this

. . . is the fear of dying. Insofar as it is fear its object is the anticipated event of being killed by sickness or an accident and thereby suffering agony and the loss of everything. Insofar as it is anxiety, its object is the absolutely unknown 'after death', the nonbeing which remains nonbeing even if it is filled with images of our present experience.<sup>5</sup>

This illustration holds true for the anxiety in every fear. The anxiety might seem to be anxiety over the ability to cope with a particular problem. But behind the

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., I, 36-7.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., I, 37.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., I, 37-8.



immediate problem is the human situation itself which is laid bare by the particular problem. It is anxiety over the inability to secure one's being against the threat of nonbeing. The particular problem stands as a symbol of this larger threat, disclosing the power of this threat to the anxious person.

Because anxiety is so devastating in its effect upon man he tries to turn anxiety into fear. He tries to find a definite object to fear and a definite danger threatened by this object. An example of this is the professed anti-communist who fears his neighbors or certain politicians, professors, clergymen, etc. The flimsiness of his "evidence" concerning their danger indicates that it is not the evidence that makes him believe they are dangerous. What makes him believe they are dangerous is his need to avoid anxiety by turning his anxiety to fear. He senses that the fear his projections symbolize is far less dangerous than the anxiety the projections are designed to hide.

The projections, however, are very limited in their protectiveness against anxiety. The same can be said of other defenses. The fact is that anxiety is a normal part of human life. It is the awareness of man's finitude--of nonbeing.

## 2. TYPES OF ANXIETY

There is no way to analyze nonbeing itself. There is nothing to analyze. It is necessary to understand it by understanding the anxiety reactions it produces in man. The anxiety comes in three forms. The three forms are all present in every person's life but, under the dominance of one of them.

### Fate and Death

Death is the absolute degree of this anxiety, fate is the relative degree of it.

The anxiety of fate and death is most basic, most universal, and inescapable. All attempts to argue it away are futile. Even if the so-called arguments for the 'immortality of the soul' had argumentative power (which they do not have) they would not convince existentially. For existentially everybody is aware of the complete loss of self which biological extinction implies.<sup>6</sup>

Death is the "no longer" of being. It is experienced by man as that which brings an end to his plans and his exertions, leaving his plans unfinished, his hopes unfulfilled and him helpless to do anything about it. In pastoral calling this is seen in the reactions of parents who are dying before their children are grown. There is anxiety over what will happen to the children. In the case of the death of the father it is likely to express itself in concern about whether there will be enough money

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., I, 42.

to take care of them (even if the insurance program is adequate). In the case of the death of the mother this frequently expresses itself as concern about whether they will be adequately cared for in the little daily matters of being fed and clothed properly, and whether there will be someone to care when they suffer the dozens of little hurts they suffer in a day.

The helplessness of the parent to do anything about these matters is complete. His efforts are at an end.

It is not often that man faces the anxiety of death directly. Death is, of course, always there as a possibility; but, for the most part, living is so much at the center of man's attention he has no reason to focus his attention on dying. The power of being is predominant and nonbeing, in its absolute degree, does not intrude upon man's awareness of the power of being.

This is less true of this form of anxiety as a relative threat. In many small and large ways man faces this type of anxiety. These anxieties have,

. . . ordinarily, a more immediate impact than the anxiety of death. The term 'fate' for this whole group of anxieties stresses one element which is common to all of them: their contingent character, their unpredictability, the impossibility of showing their meaning and purpose.<sup>7</sup>

This can be illustrated by such a simple thing as a traffic jam on the freeway. If a person is going to an

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., I, 43.

appointment that is important to him (an attempt to make a sale, get a job, etc.) and the traffic jam causes him to be late for the appointment he is likely to experience anxiety. If the traffic jam was unexpected, as is the case when it happens at a time of day when traffic would ordinarily be light, the unpredictability of it would loom large in the triggering of the anxiety. The fact that this appointment was important to him would also be a major factor in the anxiety. He could lose his chance to make the sale or get the job (or whatever else was at stake) and would have to live with the disadvantages that this involves. It could mean the loss of the opportunity to fulfill potentialities (the use of talents, the better support of one's family, the making of a lasting friendship) important enough to the person for their loss to be felt as a very real deprivation.

Furthermore, there is no way to see the purpose or meaning of the traffic jam. On the contrary, it probably was brought on by an accident, or several accidents which only serve to remind one of the suffering and senselessness of it.

The person who is in this predicament is aware of his own contingency. The traffic jam causes his life to change in directions he does not choose. At the same time, there is nothing he can do about it. He is helpless. There is no object to be attacked, or analyzed. There is no

problem to be solved. The traffic jam is an impersonal thing that isn't really a thing at all. It is an unmanageable, shapeless nothing that cannot be argued with or questioned. There is no one or no-thing to approach.

It might be claimed that the anxiety one feels at this point, although it is similar in its dynamics to the anxiety of death, is not really connected with the anxiety of death. It could be pointed out that, after all, the suffering created by the missed appointment is cause enough for the anxiety.

This fails to leave an explanation, however, for the fact that the person is likely to feel more anxiety than the missed appointment warrants. In fact, he is likely to feel some of this anxiety even when facing traffic jams which do not threaten to cause him any loss or to effect his life in any really important way.

In other words, the immediate situation is not, by itself, the cause of all the anxiety. Instead, it is caused by the fact that the immediate situation reminds one of the human situation. It is the human situation standing behind the immediate problem (traffic jam, etc.) and being revealed through the immediate problem that causes the anxiety. Anxiety over the immediate problem, then, is anxiety about death.

### Emptiness and Meaninglessness

Emptiness is the relative threat to man's spiritual self-affirmation, meaninglessness is the absolute threat to it.

The term "spiritual" here is not meant to imply anything pious or churchly. The term refers, instead, to those aspects of life for which one would use such words as culture, creativity, and meaning.

One affirms himself spiritually when he lives creatively; that is, "spontaneously, in action and reaction, with the contents of one's cultural life."<sup>8</sup> An example would be that of a person reading a book or a poem and reacting to it in such a way that he sees its relevance to himself. In doing this he has changed what he is reading (by applying to his own life) and fulfilled himself in doing so.

Everyone who lives creatively in meanings affirms himself as a participant in these meanings. He affirms himself as receiving and transforming reality creatively. He loves himself as participating in the spiritual life and as loving its contents. He loves them because they are his own fulfillment and because they are actualized through him. The scientist loves both the truth he discovers and himself insofar as he discovers it. He is held by the content of his discovery. This is what one can call 'spiritual self-affirmation'.<sup>9</sup>

This presupposes that "ultimate reality becomes manifest"<sup>10</sup> through this creativity. Only in this way can

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., I, 46.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., I, 47.

the creativity be taken with unconditional seriousness. Man is, whether he likes it or not, questioned by ultimate reality and he cannot permanently take with ultimate seriousness that which does not help him in this matter.

Where such creative participation is lost meaninglessness appears.

The anxiety of meaninglessness is anxiety about the loss of an ultimate concern, of a meaning which gives meaning to all other meanings. This anxiety is aroused by the loss of a spiritual center, of an answer, however symbolic and indirect, to the question of the meaning of existence.<sup>11</sup>

In its milder form of emptiness, the anxiety appears in connection with the breakdown of particular contents of the spiritual life.

This can be seen in the illustration of a man's experience of the breakdown of belief in progress. He is, perhaps, frustrated in his hopes for progress in his own occupational life. The bureaucratic mentality of the company he works for, the political infighting that has nothing to do with competence but which (he discovers) determines policy decisions and promotions, the fragmented nature of his work--all this can prevent him from making progress in his work.

Such an experience can cause him to lose his confidence in the dogma that hard work and increased competence on his part will give him the chance to participate in

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

"progress" and to fulfill himself (through success or a sense of accomplishment) at the same time. The awareness of this breakdown of confidence is felt by the person as a loss of interest in his work and a loss of a sense of direction that can help him know what to do about it. It is experienced as a deprivation, as a "being left out" of the chance to participate creatively in the cultural contents.

Still another example of this is seen in the case of a woman who grows up with the Cinderella story as the myth through which she tries to understand what it means to be a woman. When her husband turns out not to be a prince charming and her married life does not consist, after all, of glamorous balls, she experiences emptiness. She might, through a social life consisting of parties and "interesting" people try to recapture the sense of fulfillment she once got from the myth. But she can no longer believe it and she experiences emptiness.

The two above examples have to do with personal doubt concerning the breakdown of a belief and the loss of a chance to participate in the meaning conveyed by the belief. But emptiness also happens in connection with the loss of the power of symbols and dogmas to carry the meanings they once carried. An example of this is the emptiness that pervades Christian worship services. The rituals and symbols no longer mean to the worshippers what they once



meant. They are no longer able to reveal ultimate reality, and, consequently, are not able to freight meaning to those who participate in them.

### Guilt and Condemnation

Guilt is the relative and condemnation the absolute threat to man's moral self-affirmation.

The possibility of this threat stems from the fact that man, free as he is, is called upon to make of himself that which he potentially is. He can act only within the limits of his own destiny, of course, but within the possibilities open by that limitation he is required to fulfill himself.

Furthermore, he is called upon to answer for what he has done with himself. That which calls upon him to answer is not something external to himself--it is, in fact, his very self which knows with (conscience) himself what he has done and what he has left undone.

It might be asked, then, if it is himself that asks, can he not ignore the question. Does he have to answer?

Do I not have the right to leave my potentialities unfulfilled, to remain less than a person, to contradict my essential goodness, and thus to destroy myself?<sup>12</sup>

The fact is that we do not have such a right. When an answer is demanded of us we are required to answer--and

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<sup>12</sup>Paul Tillich, Morality and Beyond (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 24.

to the extent that the answer is not suitable we are judged guilty.

It is not an external prohibition against self-destruction--bodily, psychologically, or morally--that we experience in states of despair, but the silent voice of our own being which denies us the right to self-destruction.<sup>13</sup>

In its extreme intensity the awareness of our failure to fulfill ourselves can drive us to "complete self-rejection, to the feeling of being condemned--not to an external punishment but to the despair of having lost our destiny."<sup>14</sup>

A word should be said at this point about the interrelatedness of the three types of anxiety. Fate and death tends to increase the anxiety of guilt; and guilt is, as St. Paul says, the "sting of death." Spiritual nonbeing is also interrelated with guilt.

Obedience to the moral norm, i.e. to one's own essential being, excludes emptiness and meaninglessness in their radical forms. If the spiritual contents have lost their power the self-affirmation of the moral personality is a way in which meaning can be rediscovered. The simple call to duty can save from emptiness, while the disintegration of the moral consciousness is an almost irresistible basis for the attack of spiritual nonbeing.<sup>14</sup>

### 3. DESPAIR

Despair is not a different form of anxiety. It is the extreme degree of anxiety. Tillich calls it the

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Paul Tillich, The Courage To Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 54.

boundary line, it is as far as it is possible to go. This insight is duplicated in such popular figures of speech as the phrase, "at the end of my rope." The etymology of the word despair, Dr. Tillich points out, is: without hope.

The person who is in despair feels that nonbeing is completely victorious and that there is no chance to reverse the outcome. But, Tillich points out, it is significant that he "feels" that nonbeing is victorious. The fact that he feels it means that there is in him enough of the power of being to feel. Thus, the triumph is a limited one.

To the person who feels despair, however, the element of hopelessness is so overpowering that he would like to get rid of it by getting rid of being. This would, in fact, solve the problem of the element of the anxiety of fate and death. But it would not solve the problem of the element of guilt and condemnation. Because of this fact, the futility of it is seen. Thus, the problem of emptiness and meaninglessness is left unsolved.

This is what makes despair so desperate. There is no hope of winning the game. And yet, to cash in one's chips is not really a solution either. This is what makes the despair so desperate.

Dr. Tillich states that "all human life can be interpreted as a continuous attempt to avoid despair."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

## CHAPTER V

### PATHOLOGICAL ANXIETY

thus far, only normal or existential anxiety has been discussed. This anxiety is inevitable because it is a part of the essential nature of existence. It cannot be removed through psychotherapy.

It is now time to discuss a kind of anxiety that is removable through psychotherapy. It is not normal but pathological.

#### 1. THE NATURE OF PATHOLOGICAL ANXIETY

The nature of pathological anxiety comes from its relationship to existential anxiety. It has already been pointed out that existential anxiety, when it becomes extreme, leads to despair. It has also been pointed out that all of human behavior can be understood as an attempt to avoid despair.

There are two ways despair can be avoided. One is to accept the anxiety into one's self-affirmation. In other words it is affirmation "in spite of" nonbeing. For example, if one in actualizing himself finds himself suffering a sense of helplessness (the anxiety of fate) he can avoid despair by affirming himself in spite of the helplessness. But, if the sense of helplessness is so upsetting to him that he does not succeed in taking his sense of

helplessness into his self-affirmation he must find another solution.

The other way he can avoid despair is by affirming himself in such a way as to avoid the sense of helplessness. This would mean that he would have to avoid those situations and those self-actualizations that tend to trigger the sense of helplessness in him. To do this, of course, would be to avoid being. Being would be sought when it did not threaten to lead him to a sense of helplessness but would be avoided when it did so threaten.

Other examples of this are the avoidance of intimacy (being) in order to avoid rejection (nonbeing), the avoidance of the possibility of accomplishing something (being) in order to avoid the possibility of failure (nonbeing), the avoidance of acknowledging impulses (being) in order to avoid disapproval (nonbeing), avoidance of personal autonomy (being) in order to avoid guilt and insecurity (nonbeing). Such examples, and many others, can be found in the cases that come to the attention of the psychotherapist.

In Tillich's words, "Neurosis is a way of avoiding nonbeing by avoiding being."<sup>1</sup>

When one does this he is able to affirm himself but it is a limited affirmation. He sacrifices many of his

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Tillich, The Courage To Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 66.

potentialities by not allowing them to be actualized. Then, the limited self, shorn of the potentialities whose actualization threatens to bring about a confrontation with non-being, is affirmed. An example of this would be seen in the case of a man who avoids the affirmation of his sexuality in order to avoid the anxiety that sexual intercourse arouses in him. Perhaps he becomes an ascetic or perhaps he becomes a moralistic crusader. In the first case he affirms himself in his piety, in the second case he affirms himself in his "righteousness." But in either case it is a reduced self that is affirmed. It is a self in which dynamics as expressed through sexuality is stifled by form as expressed through the asceticism or the moralistic crusading. It is less than his essential self.

This reduced affirmation explains the connection between neurosis and creativity. This connection has been noted often enough to become a part of the popular lore of our culture.

The connection is due to the fact that the affirmation of a reduced self increases the intensity with which that reduced self is actualized. This can be illustrated by citing the example of a pianist whose self-affirmation does not include very much interpersonal interaction through the usual methods of expression. He is shy in conversation, he doesn't know how to have fun at parties, he is self-conscious around strangers. But when he sits

down at the piano the anxieties recede. He can express his deepest anguish and hopes while sensing an answering empathy from his listeners (and perhaps from the long-dead composer, the absent teacher, the human race, the universe). It does not take much imagination to understand why he would put much more of his energy, time and, one might say, his soul into his playing than would another person whose self-affirmation would include enriching personal relationships that would compete with the piano for time, energy and "soul." It also does not take much imagination to understand how the neurotic pianist might be the more creative pianist of the two.

The foregoing illustrations raise the issue of the difference between normal and neurotic people. It is worthwhile to look a bit closer at this issue--the difference serves to sharpen the understanding of the nature of pathological anxiety.

Of course, it is often said that everybody is neurotic to some extent and that the difference between the normal and the neurotic is only a matter of degree. Tillich does not deny this but insists that a distinction can be made for the purposes of better understanding the nature of neuroses.

The difference between the neurotic and the healthy (although potentially neurotic) personality is the following: the neurotic personality, on the basis of his greater sensitivity to nonbeing and consequently of his profounder anxiety, has settled down to a fixed,

though limited and unrealistic, self-affirmation. This is, so to speak, the castle to which he has retired and which he defends with all means of psychological resistance against attack, be it from the side of reality or from the side of the analyst. And this resistance is not without some instinctive wisdom. The neurotic is aware of the danger of a situation in which his unrealistic self-affirmation is broken down and no realistic self-affirmation takes its place. The danger is either that he will fall back into another and much better defended neurosis or that with the breakdown of his limited self-affirmation he will fall into unlimited despair.<sup>2</sup>

The normal person is not so walled in with a "fixed, . . . limited and unrealistic" self-affirmation that must be defended at all costs. His self-affirmation is fragmentary but it is broader and more flexible. The illustration of the two pianists will serve to illustrate this point. The normal one was able to affirm himself when confronting reality in social relationships as well as when playing the piano. Therefore, he did not have so much at stake in the matter of playing the piano. With the neurotic, on the other hand, everything hinged on the piano playing. If nonbeing threatened him in this area he was more likely to feel himself overwhelmed by nonbeing because it was the only self-affirmation he had. He could not afford to let it be threatened. The normal pianist, on the other hand, could be more relaxed about his music.

One more thing needs to be said about the nature of pathological anxiety--that is its unrealistic character. It serves to protect the neurotic against reality but, at the

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 68.



same time, it sets him against reality. Reality continues to get through the defenses causing him to pull his defenses more tightly around himself to avoid reality. But his attempts to avoid reality cause him to be beset by it. An example of this can be seen in cases of people who avoid trying to make friends because they fear rejection. Their isolation is their protection against the reality of rejection. But their lack of friendliness causes people to reject them.

## 2. TYPES OF PATHOLOGICAL ANXIETY

The three types of pathological anxiety are determined both by the three types of existential anxiety from which they derive and from the nature of pathological anxiety itself.

### Unrealistic Security

Unrealistic security is the pathological anxiety that corresponds to the existential anxiety of fate and death. It arises because of the failure of self-affirmation in spite of fate and death; or, to put it another way, it derives from the failure to accept fate and death into one's self-affirmation.

To the extent that this existential anxiety is accepted into one's self-affirmation realistic systems of security are built to guard against fate and against death. Care is taken of one's health, the medical advice of the

physician is sought and followed when it is necessary, dangerously foolhardy risks (such as reckless driving) are avoided, training for an occupation is acquired and the performance necessary to make an income is produced, insurance is purchased and investments are made, a home is purchased. An attempt is made to secure for one a place in the world. Even though one knows that he has no place that he can finally call his own he does his best to secure a place and defend it against unforeseen accidents as well as competition from others.

As a society, care is taken to keep the economics healthy so that the nation can prosper, police are hired to keep order in the cities, a judicial system is supported to offer as much protection from injustice as possible, armed forces are kept ready to offer protection from invasion, programs are devised in education, health and welfare to protect society from widespread ignorance, disease and the waste of human resources through personal economic reverses.

These and similar precautions do not give an absolute security. They give, instead, an uncertain security--a security that offers as much protection as possible to finite people. One can live in such uncertain security only if he can accept the anxiety of the uncertainty into his self-affirmation.

If he cannot accept this anxiety into his self-affirmation he can avoid despair by turning to a security that gives the illusion of leaving out the element of uncertainty. He might, for example, become a hypochondriac or a health food fadist or he might over-exercise in order to protect himself against disease. These measures would not, of course, protect him. It is more likely that he would end up fearing what does not need to be feared (for example, the germs on a doorknob) but would not be concerned about the fact that death might at any moment deprive him of the change to live the life that he is now wasting in these trivial pursuits.

This illustration shows the marks of pathological security. It is unrealistic in that it leads the person to fear what is not dangerous but causes him to ignore that which is dangerous.

Another example of this is found in the reaction that came from owners of Thunderbird automobiles when the Ford Motor Company installed flashing red lights to warn the driver to fasten his seat belt. Many owners, instead of fastening their seat belts, beat at the flashing red light, even with their hands, to break it and stop the flashing. They feared being reminded of the possibility of death while driving. They did not fear the possibility of death itself (which should have been feared) but the reminder (which was not at all dangerous).

Other examples can be seen in the cases of people who will cling to jobs that do not offer them security rather than change to jobs that will offer them security-- simply because they can't face the anxiety that comes with starting a new job. The old job gives them an unrealistic security.

Another example is that of the man who works much too hard at his job in order to be secure only to drive himself to a heart attack and lose it all. The security that his driving ambition gives him is an unrealistic one. He fears every little failure that might happen on the job (including those that were not likely and those that weren't important) but he does not fear the loss of his health, nor even of his life.

Such examples of unrealistic security can be multiplied many times--housewives who gradually reach the point that they can hardly move beyond the narrow circle of home, the children's school, church and their usual shopping centers; people who confine their social life to an unnecessarily small circle because this seems to offer them protection from rejection or from being taken advantage of; youth who avoid going to college because of the security they get from having an income immediately after graduation from high school.

All these examples are of unrealistic security. They lead to a security that protects from dangers that are

not really dangerous but which leave one exposed to real dangers. This unrealistic security is the pathological anxiety that derives from the existential anxiety of fate and death.

### Unrealistic Perfection

Unrealistic perfection is the pathological anxiety that corresponds to the existential anxiety of guilt and condemnation. It derives from the failure to accept the anxiety of guilt and condemnation into one's self-affirmation.

To the extent that the existential anxiety is accepted into one's self-affirmation a moral perfection is developed which gives a realistic protection from the worst onslaughts of the anxiety. By a moral perfection Tillich does not mean perfectionism; on the contrary, perfectionism would be an outgrowth of the pathological form of anxiety. By perfection (this is an unfortunate choice of words but the writer cannot think of a better one) Tillich means that one accepts responsibility for one's self-actualization and makes the decisions, develops the self-discipline and the habits necessary for this.

A realistic moral conduct would mean responsibly addressing the problems and crises of one's life. This can be seen fairly clearly in connection with Erik Erikson's stages of growth. It is the responsibility of the teenager,

for example, to pursue his own identity through a bit of rebellion toward his parents and society in general, a trying out of various occupational and social roles by role playing and imagination, conforming to the necessities of study and other elements involved in the search for identity.

It is the responsibility of the middle-aged adult to address himself to the problems of posterity, perhaps through his responsible care for his own children, perhaps also through work in the community at large.

Other age groups, according to Erikson's scheme, have their characteristic responsibilities.

A realistic perfection would mean the development of the self-discipline necessary to the carrying out of these responsibilities. But this perfection is imperfect. One cannot accept these responsibilities in their full force if he cannot accept into his self-affirmation the guilt of his own imperfections.

When one fails to accept this guilt there is one other way that despair can be avoided. That is to find a way of self-affirmation that leaves out the awareness of these imperfections.

One might do this by narrowing his decisions down to a limited few in which one feels that he will not make mistakes. This might also include an intense concentration on the decisions one does make so that they will be

absolutely right. The element of unreality enters into this area in that when one takes this approach his guilt feelings are misplaced. He feels guilty about matters that should not cause him to feel guilty at all while he does not feel guilty where his guilt is real (in the failure to actualize his life).

An example of this would be the perfectionistic mother who feels guilty if her house is not precisely clean and in order and if her children are not well organized and politely behaved, but who is unconcerned about the lack of rapport or of spontaneous affection between herself and her children.

Another example would be that of the crusader for censorship who would be out to save young people from seeing anything that had to do with sex. He might feel guilty if he does not work hard enough to make his censorship effective but have no guilt feelings at all about the self-righteousness and hostility that are involved in his crusade.

Still another example would be that of the adult who lets his parents dominate him. He might feel very guilty because he is tempted to make a decision contrary to their wishes but have no guilt feelings about the fact that he is letting them ruin his life.

All of these are examples of an unrealistic perfectionism. They seem to give protection from guilt while,

in actuality they expose one to guilt by hiding from him his real responsibilities--thus leaving these responsibilities uncared for. This unrealistic perfectionism is the pathological anxiety that derives from the existential anxiety of guilt and condemnation.

### Unrealistic Certitude

Unrealistic certitude is the pathological anxiety that corresponds to the existential anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness. It derives from the failure to accept the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness into one's self-affirmation.

To the extent that this existential anxiety is accepted into one's self-affirmation realistic systems of certitude, supported by tradition and authority, are created. The most obvious example of this is Christianity. The task of the individual realistically searching for meaning through Christianity is the creation of an understanding of Christianity's application and relationship to his own life. This approach to the problem of meaning served western civilization until a couple of hundred years ago. Then, it was replaced by the idea of progress--at first, progress from supersitition to enlightenment; now, technological and economic progress.

The doctrine of progress has now lost most of its capacity for bestowing meaning. Two world wars, a



depression, a continuing cold war and the return of barbarism has eroded the credibility of this system of meaning.

The individual faces, in addition, the growing regimentation of his life (particularly in his work) with its resulting loss of creative scope and stimulus. In his attempts to cope with this he is tempted to try to find his answer in self-indulgence (which is made easy) rather than in responsibility (which is subtly discouraged).

In this predicament man tends to create unrealistic systems of certitude. The most obvious examples of these are fundamentalism (which is a narrowed, heavily defended distortion of Christianity) and right-wingism (which includes a narrowed, heavily defended distortion of the doctrine of progress). Believers in both these systems doubt what is quite believable (the universality of sin and the possibility of redemption) but try to believe passionately what is very doubtful (the virgin birth, the priority of economic "rights" over all other considerations).

The individual, in addition, creates his own system of certitude. Perhaps he tells himself that when he gets a promotion it will give meaning to his life--or perhaps when he gets a new sports car or a bigger home or takes a vacation or has an affair. A woman is likely to believe that a wedding will give meaning to her life--then, being accepted into the right circles, getting new clothes, etc., etc. One believes in the rightness of the majority,

another in the goodness of everybody, still another in religion.

All of these tend to believe what is very doubtful and to doubt what is practically certain. This unrealistic certitude is the pathological anxiety that derives from the existential anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness.

### 3. CONCLUSION

These pathological anxieties are responsive to psychotherapy and can be removed by psychotherapy. There is, however, a limit to the effectiveness of psychotherapy in this area unless that psychotherapy has an understanding of the ontological realities and of the nature of existential anxiety. That limit is created by the fact that the pathological anxieties are caused by the failure to take existential anxieties into one's self-affirmation. This means that the only effective protection from the pathological anxieties is a courage to be "in spite of" the existential anxieties.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE COURAGE TO BE

The courage that makes it possible for man to affirm himself in spite of the existential anxieties must be one in which the power of being is effective in spite of the power of nonbeing. To say that the power of being is effective is to say that existential estrangement is overcome--even though fragmentarily.

#### 1. THE POWER OF BEING

Man experiences the power of being as spiritual presence, "a meaning-bearing power which grasps the human spirit in an ecstatic experience."<sup>1</sup> He experiences it as the shaking and transforming power of the New Being in which he participates and which unites him with his essential being. He experiences it as a manifestation of the ground of being in its healing power.

This ecstatic experience must be distinguished from the ecstasy of intoxication. Intoxication can come as a result of "falling in love," joining a cause, drinking alcohol, or anything else that tends to deliver one momentarily from the burden of existence.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), III, 115.

The search for intoxication is seen in counseling as the search for some way to make the neurosis work. It might be said that intoxication is due to the illusion that one has escaped the destructiveness of the neurosis without the pain of giving up the neurosis itself. Theodor Reik<sup>2</sup> has shown that falling in love is similar to a religious conversion in which the lover feels himself to be forgiven his shortcomings. The feeling, however, is temporary and disappears when he realizes that the shortcomings still exist within him.

Tillich points out that intoxication is not only temporary but is, in fact, destructive in that it intensifies the very destructiveness from which it gave temporary release.

This leads to the question of a criterion to distinguish between the ecstasy of intoxication and the ecstasy of the spiritual presence. Tillich says that the criterion is the presence of creativity in the ecstasy of the spiritual presence and the absence of it in the ecstasy of intoxication.

When one is grasped by the spiritual presence or, to put it in other terms, when one is grasped by the New Being as ultimate concern the preliminary concerns upon which his unbelief, hubris and concupiscence have focused are shown

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<sup>2</sup>Theodor Reik, Psychology of Sex Relations (New York: Grove Press, 1945).

to be preliminary. Their preliminary character is exposed in contrast to the ground of being whose ultimacy grasps one.

When this happens one is offered healing for the existential estrangement of his life. Integration, growth and self-transcendence become possible in a less ambiguous way than is ordinarily the case.

Examples of this are seen frequently by pastors upon ministering to people who have recently faced death--either the possibility of their own or the death of somebody near to them. A man who has recently had a heart attack, for example, might very well become a new man as a result of it. People who are going through mourning are sometimes puzzled (and embarrassed) by the increased joy of being alive that is sometimes experienced in mourning. Involved in this ecstatic experience is a shaking up of one's values and commitments that accompanies self-integration, self-creativity and self-transcendence. Things that had seemed important are seen as petty and not worth the hostility and anguish they had formerly caused while things that had once been passed by become manifestations of the holiness of life and invitations to personal fulfillment. In concrete terms this might express itself as less interest in petty complaints about associates and more appreciation of their essential dignity along with more of a desire to participate in the centers of their beings.

The power of being can use any experience, person or thing to manifest itself to man. When it does manifest itself through grasping a man, its grasping is that man's acceptance by the ground of being. The question that now arises is whether this acceptance can give the courage to be "in spite of" the anxieties that are stimulated by the awareness of nonbeing.

## 2. ACCEPTANCE

### Guilt and Acceptance

There is acceptance in spite of guilt in every way of finding the courage to be. In the conformity of the American culture, for example, there is acceptance in spite of not having conformed in the past if one demonstrates his willingness to change his ways. Such studies as William Whyte's The Organization Man and David Riesman's The Lonely Crowd demonstrate the extent to which society will go in offering acceptance to those who, even with some reluctance and hesitation, are willing to meet the requirements.

In counseling one sees again and again that the counselee is offered release from his guilt if he will meet certain conditions. In some cases, he feels that he can be accepted if he lives up to his self-image, in others he can find acceptance if he lives up to the expectations of certain other people (wife, father, the people at work, etc.). The fact is that most people come to counseling

with the hope that the counselor can help them measure up to these requirements.

As Tillich points out, however, the Protestant message is that of an acceptance that does not depend upon one's meeting any requirement. This is made clear in Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone. It is not through becoming just (acceptable) that one is justified (accepted). This can be seen in the biblical stories of the Christ in which his stance toward the pharisees is seen. He was not impressed by their meticulous keeping of the law and he did not hold out to them the promise of participation in the kingdom of God as a reward for their keeping of the law. He made the promise instead to the thief on the cross and to a woman taken in adultery.

Justification, or acceptance, is given in spite of the fact that man is unacceptable. Acceptance is unconditional. Only in this way--being accepted through unacceptable--can guilt be overcome. To have to get rid of the guilt would put man in a predicament from which there can be no escape. The fact is that man is guilty--that is to say, he is estranged from his essential nature and he is responsible for the estrangement. There is no way to get around this fact. Therefore, acceptance must, to be effective, meet him where he is (in his guilt) and offer him acceptance "in spite of it."

Furthermore, the Protestant affirmation asks for God as the source of the acceptance. In the counseling relationship the counselor accepts the counselee but it is not his own acceptance that he offers. He represents the acceptance of the power of being. It is an acceptance that is there regardless of what the counselor does or does not do but which he recognizes and expresses. Through him the counselee becomes aware of the acceptance by the power of being.

In the acceptance of the acceptance man is able to affirm himself. He is given the power to be (which is his acceptance) and in the strength of this power he can actualize himself because in his self-actualization self-integration predominates over disintegration, self-creativity predominates over destruction and self-transcendence predominates over self-profanization. As one whose self-actualization expresses, predominately, his essential nature he can affirm himself.

#### Fate and Acceptance

The anxiety of fate is connected with the anxiety of guilt. Tillich notes St. Paul's insights about sin as the sting of death and death as the wages of sin. He also points out that Luther saw the connection between these anxieties. Tillich does not spell out the connection except to point out that anxiety about death increases the



awareness of guilt and that the anxiety of fate gets a moral interpretation.

It seems to this writer that the connection can be partially understood by noting the fact that death puts an end to the hope for another chance. The moral guilt becomes, at death, the final word on one's life. There is no chance to change the judgment against oneself.

This is also true when it is the death of someone to whom a person is closely related. The unreconciled problems of the relationship remain unsolved. The other person is dead and the kind words that should have been said can no longer be said. The chance is gone forever. This can be seen in the guilt feelings that are expressed by the survivors.

It should also be noted that death is sometimes seen as, (and sometimes is) partially the result of the person's own irresponsible living. In this case, death executes the sentence against the guilty party.

What is true of the connection between death and guilt is also true of the connection between fate and guilt. This can be seen in the numerous regrets that arise in connection with the lost opportunities from which fate makes our separation effective.

Christianity's answer to the problem of fate has always been one in which the connection between fate and guilt is severed. Death, for example, is acceptance into

communion with God. (Contrast this with the Roman worship of Victory in which death was seen as defeat and, therefore, as condemnation.) This Christian message is not the doctrine of the immortality of the soul (a doctrine which denies the reality of death) but a message of acceptance in spite of being unacceptable.

This acceptance takes the sting from death, and from fate. They are no longer executioners of the guilty party. Neither are they the final word on man's life. The final word is God's acceptance of man. This acceptance is not destroyed nor even decreased by fate or death. In the acceptance of God's acceptance fate is robbed of its sting. It remains an anxiety. But it does not cause man to be unable to affirm himself. He can affirm himself in spite of fate because he is accepted in spite of being unacceptable--and because fate does not change this fact.

#### Meaninglessness and Acceptance

How does man experience the power of acceptance when doubt undermines the significance of such acceptance? When meaninglessness is severe, one doubts whether it matters whether one is accepted in spite of guilt; one wonders whether it matters whether one is accepted in the face of fate. If it does not matter, the acceptance is of no value. Thus, the healing effect of the acceptance is invalidated by doubt and meaninglessness. This anxiety separates one

from the acceptance that is effective in the other anxieties.

Then, is there an experience of acceptance that is effective in the face of doubt about the validity of acceptance? Tillich's answer is that meaninglessness that "is experienced, includes an experience of the 'power of acceptance'."<sup>3</sup> Even in the experience of despair about the meaning of life, this holds true. In despair the meaning of life is reduced to despair about the meaning of life. But the power to despair about the meaning of life is an experience of the power of being and is acceptance by the ground of being.

### 3. THE ACCEPTANCE OF ACCEPTANCE

It is not enough to be accepted by the ground of being. In order to be healed one must accept the acceptance. Not everyone is willing to do this.

They want sickness as a refuge into which they can escape from the harshness of an insecure life. And since the medical care has made it more difficult to escape into bodily illness, they choose mental illness. But does not everybody dislike sickness, the pain, the discomfort and the danger connected with it? Of course, we dislike our sickness with some parts of our souls; but we like it with some other parts, mostly unconsciously, sometimes even consciously. But nobody can be healed especially of mental disorders and diseases who does not want it with his whole heart. And this is why they have become almost an epidemic in this country. People are fleeing into a situation where others must

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<sup>3</sup>Paul Tillich, The Courage To Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 177.

take care of them, where they exercise power through weakness or where they create an imaginary world in which it is nice to live as long as real life does not touch them. Don't underestimate this temptation.<sup>4</sup>

There is healing, however, for those who do accept acceptance. Consciously to accept the acceptance of the power of being makes self-affirmation possible.

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<sup>4</sup>Paul Tillich, The New Being (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 36.

## PART II

### CHAPTER VII

#### TILLICH AND SIGMUND FREUD

"Tillich became well acquainted with psychoanalysis while he was still in Germany, before 1933."<sup>1</sup> He was greatly stimulated by Freud and has called him "the most profound of all depth psychologists."<sup>2</sup> As Tillich saw it, theology owed a great debt to Freud for his work in the area of the unconscious which re-opened for theology a territory it had made its own since the time of Christ but which it lately had tended to forget. Tillich points out that the literature of Christian theology contains great insights into the unconscious but that it took Freud (along with Schelling, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and others) to remind the church of this fact.

With all Tillich's respect for Freud there are areas of serious disagreement. It will be helpful to see where Freud and Tillich go together and where they do not.

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<sup>1</sup>Seward Hiltner, "Tillich and Pastoral Psychology," Pastoral Psychology, III:29 (December, 1952), 9.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 121.

## 1. FREUD AND THE ONTOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

Dynamics and Form

Freud sees the basic conflict as that between "unconscious drives and oppressive norms."<sup>3</sup> A report of one of his well known cases (Elizabeth v. R.) will illustrate this thesis.

In 1892, Freud reports a colleague referred to him a young lady who had been suffering from pains in her legs for two years. Things had now reached the point where the pain was slightly effecting her walking. No organic cause could be found and the problem had been diagnosed as hysteria.

The girl had, some time previously, suffered the death of her father. After this her mother had become ill. The girl was keenly aware of the changed circumstances and of the difference this made in the general climate of the family life. She dedicated herself to caring for her mother in the hope that the good times could be restored. Her own illness and the death of one of her sisters were somewhat damaging to this hope.

All of these things were, of course, very unfortunate and elicited Dr. Freud's sympathies but they did not explain the cause of the hysteria.

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<sup>3</sup>Paul Tillich, The Courage To Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 64.

There is no reason to go into all the facets of this case but it is worthwhile to see how Freud discovered the cause of the main part of the hysteria. He noticed that certain events would elicit the pain. One such incident happened while the patient was in his office. He heard footsteps in the next room, then, a man's voice. At this point the patient suggested that the interview be terminated because she heard her brother-in-law asking for her. At the same time, Dr. Freud noticed, her facial features showed that the pain had returned.

This strengthened a suspicion that Freud already had and caused him to resolve to follow it. He asked her to tell him again about the first appearance of the pain. There followed a series of stories in each of which she had thought of the relationship between her sister and her husband (the brother-in-law whose arrival at Freud's office had started the pain) and wished that she might meet such a man who would be her husband.

Then, she told about getting the letter about her sister's illness and of the trip with her mother to see the sister. She reported that she had avoided thinking about what she might find when she reached her sister's side.

This was followed by the reminiscences of her arrival in Vienna--the impressions which she received from the relatives at the station, the short journey from Vienna to the neighboring summer resort where her sister lived, the arrival in the evening, the hasty

walk through the garden to the door of the little garden pavilion--a silence in the house, the oppressive darkness, the fact of not having been received by the brother-in-law. She then recalled standing before the bed seeing the deceased, and in the moment of the awful certainty that the beloved sister had died without having taken leave of them and without having her last days eased through their nursing--in that very moment another thought flashed through Elizabeth's brain, which peremptorily repeated itself. The thought, which flashed like dazzling lightning through the darkness, was, "Now he is free again, and I can become his wife."<sup>4</sup>

It was very difficult for the patient to accept the fact that for a long time she had been in love with her brother-in-law but as she was able to accept it she was cured.

Here is demonstrated the basic conflict as Freud sees it. A wish prompted by impulses runs into a norm that prohibits its direct fulfillment. The patient's concern for the welfare of her family, made it out of the question that she would try to break up the sister's home in order to marry her brother-in-law. In fact, it was so out of the question that she could not imagine herself even wanting to do such a thing. But to marry her brother-in-law was exactly what she wanted. So, the symptoms were a compromise between the wish and the prohibition against that wish.

If Freud and Tillich are compared at this point it is easy to see that what Freud has done is describe brilliantly the problem that develops when the essential

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<sup>4</sup>Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud, Studies in Hysteria (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 111.



unity of dynamics and form is broken in existential estrangement. Form in this case is represented by the structure of the family and by the mores of society as well as by the patient's own loyalties and moral values. Form is made effective in its prohibitive power, according to Freud, through the superego. The dynamics is, of course, represented by the unrecognized yearning to marry the brother-in-law. The dynamics and form are in conflict with each other and threaten to destroy the patient. Failing to affirm herself in this predicament she escapes the full impact of the destructiveness by developing her neurosis.

The conflict of the ontological elements of dynamics and form is a good starting place for understanding Freud. It makes unnecessary the rather unimportant criticism that Freud was too much concerned with sexuality. Sexuality is one of the ways in which dynamics makes its thrust and Freud has done a great service by calling this fact to the attention of a culture that had denied it.

Sexuality is not the only way that dynamics expresses itself and Freud eventually realized this. He said, in Civilization and its Discontents,

In all that follows I adopt the standpoint, therefore, that the inclination to aggression is an original, self-subsisting instinctual disposition in man, and I return to my view that it constitutes the greatest impediment to civilization.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents  
(New York: Norton, 1962), p. 69.

His treatment of aggression, like his treatment of sexuality, describes the conflict between dynamics and form. In this case, form is represented by civilization which, to preserve the species, instills its demands in the individual in the form of superego. Dynamics is, of course, represented by aggression.

The center of Freud's thought, then, has to do with the conflict between dynamics and form. Form is internalized in what Freud calls the superego. Dynamics is not only sexuality, or aggression; it is potentiality. As Tillich puts it,

And the 'unconscious' of Hartmann and Freud is not a 'room' which can be described as though it were a cellar filled with things which once belonged to the upper rooms in which the sun of consciousness shines. The unconscious is mere potentiality, and it should not be painted in the image of the actual.<sup>6</sup>

It is in the drive of the potential to become the actual that the conflict which Freud describes is instigated.

If it be true, then, that dynamics and form is the ontological polarity with which Freud is primarily concerned one would expect the problem of growth and destruction to be a more important issue with Freud than either integration and disintegration or self-transcendence and profanization.

This is, in fact, the case. His description of the formation of neuroses makes clear that, in his view,

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<sup>6</sup>Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), I, 179.

neuroses stem from a failure of growth. One fails to move successfully from the oral phase to the anal phase to the phallic through latency to a successful heterosexual orientation. Each of these stages represents an orientation of the personality and the movement from stage to stage involves what Tillich calls the establishing of new centers.

The failure to move successfully from stage to stage is what Freud calls fixation. He describes the process with an analogy.

When a whole people leaves its dwellings in order to seek a new country, as often happened in earlier periods of human history, their entire number certainly did not reach the new destination. Apart from losses due to other causes, it must invariably have happened that small groups or bands of the migrating people halted on the way, and settled down in these stopping-places, while the main body went further.<sup>7</sup>

This fixation of a part of the impulses means that, while the person is trying to become established in a heterosexual orientation some of his impulses might very well be fixated at the anal stage. This sets the stage for what Freud calls regression.

If you think of a migrating people who have left large numbers at the stopping-places on their way, you will see that the foremost will naturally fall back upon these positions when they are defeated or when they meet with an enemy too strong for them. And again, the more of their number they leave behind in their progress, the sooner will they be in danger of defeat.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Sigmund Freud, A General Introduction to Psycho-analysis (New York: Washington Square Press, 1952), p. 349.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 350.

This is an analogy to what happens to the impulses when they are defeated through frustration. If, in their regression, they do not run into a strong prohibition they use the chosen fixated positions as their outlet and become a perversion. If they do run into a prohibition a symptom is formed which is a compromise between the impulse and its inhibition. Thus does a neurosis begin.

Neurosis stems, in other words, from the failure to grow. That it also has to do with destruction is clear from the nature of masochism and sadism.

It appears, then, that Freud's approach is basically a psychology having to do with the polarity of dynamics and form. As will be seen, the awareness of this makes a difference in the way the therapist uses Freud's ideas.

#### The Other Polarities

The polarity of individualization and participation is not absent from Freud's considerations. It is, after all, in the participation in family life that the form which conflicts with dynamics is instilled in the child. The Oedipal problem, which holds central importance in Freud's thought, arises as a result of the child's participation in the lives of both parents.

Furthermore, the problems that arise in the area of dynamics and form have an effect on one's interpersonal relationships. The ability to participate successfully in

other people's lives is dependent upon the resolving of the conflict between dynamics and form in such a way as to give both of them their due in a creative relationship.

The polarity of individualization and participation is, however, subordinate to that of dynamics and form in Freud's thought. The former is important in that it contributes to the latter and is, in turn, effected by the latter. But it is not, in itself, the area of conflict. That area is found in dynamics and form.

Recognition of this fact is important for the use of Freud's theory. Tillich's insight is that the polarity of individualization and participation, while it is inter-related with dynamics and form in such a way that they interpenetrate and cannot finally be separated, nevertheless is not subordinate to the latter. Rather individualization and participation is a polarity in its own right, interpenetrating but co-equal with dynamics and form.

This fact opens up the possibility of using interpersonal psychologies without seeing these as necessarily in conflict with Freud's basically intrapsychic approach. Both approaches are legitimate in their own right. There is no reason to be concerned with the question of which is basic and which is derived. Both of them are basic. Each is an expression of a polarity in the ontological elements of being.

In the matter of the polarity of freedom and destiny Freud must be considered to be inadequate. He understands, somewhat, the element of destiny. Tillich points out that destiny includes one's psychological conditioning. It is to Freud's great credit that he awakened the twentieth century to the fact that destiny has such a strong hold on man.

But he does not understand freedom so well. If he had done more in the area of ego psychology perhaps he would have eliminated this deficiency from his theory. However, it is possible that not even this would have sufficed because to understand fully the element of freedom in its relationship to destiny one needs to understand the difference between existential and essential man. As will be seen shortly Freud did not understand this difference (which fact effected his understanding of all the polarities).

At any rate, his failure to understand the element of freedom has resulted in the fact that one of the chief criticisms made against him is that he has a mechanistic view of man. This part of Freud must be rejected in favor of a view of man that recognizes man's essential freedom. This raises the question of man's essential nature and the relationship of this issue to Freud's theory.

## 2. THE PROBLEM OF ESSENTIAL MAN

Tillich notes that the following propositions are fundamental in Christianity. 1. Man, as created, is good. 2. Man has fallen into existential estrangement. 3. There is the possibility of salvation.

These propositions recognize the essence as well as the existential estrangement of man.

Freud, in this respect, was unclear, namely, he was not able to distinguish man's essential and existential nature. This is a basic theological criticism, not of any special result of his thinking, but of his doctrine of man and of the central intuition he has of man. His thought about libido makes this deficiency very obvious.

Man, according to him, is infinite libido which never can be satisfied and which therefore produces the desire to get rid of oneself, the desire he has called the death instinct. And this is not only true of the individual, it is also true of man's relation to culture as a whole. His dismay about culture shows that he is very consistent in his negative judgments about man only from the point of view of existence and not from the point of view of essence, only from the point of view of estrangement and not from the point of view of essential goodness, then this consequence is unavoidable. And it is true for Freud in this respect.

Let us make this clear by means of a theological concept which is very old, the classical concept of concupiscence. This concept is used in Christian theology exactly as libido is used by Freud, but it is used for man under the conditions of existence; it is the indefinite striving beyond any given satisfaction, to induce satisfaction beyond the given one. But according to theological doctrine, man in his essential goodness is not in the state of concupiscence or indefinite libido. Rather he is directed to a definite special subject, to content, to somebody, to something with which he is connected in love, or eros, or agape, whatever it may be. If this is the case, then the situation is quite different. Then you can have libido, but the fulfilled libido is real fulfillment, and you are not driven beyond this indefinitely. This means that Freud's description of libido is to be

viewed theologically as the description of man in his existential estrangement. But Freud does not know any other man, and this is the basic criticism that theology would weigh against him on this point.

Now, fortunately, Freud, like most great men, was not consistent. With respect to the healing process, he knew something about the healed man. And insofar as he was convinced of the possibility of healing, this contradicted profoundly his fundamental restriction to existential man. In popular terms, his pessimism about the nature of man and his optimism about the possibilities of healing were never reconciled in him or in his followers.<sup>9</sup>

Freud's view on libido was consistent with his own anthropology. Influenced by his own scientific background, particularly his training at Brucke's Institute of Physiology, Freud saw man as an energy system. This energy, libido, was blocked, expressed directly or through sublimation or through symptoms. It is easy to see how, with this as a starting point for his anthropology, he would develop a psychology of dynamics and form. It is also easy to see how he would be unable to develop a concept of essential as opposed to existential man.

This approach has put his theories into unnecessary conflict with other psychological systems (expressing other ontological polarities) and has made it impossible for him to understand man's freedom (how can an energy system be free?).

This concept of Freud's must be rejected. Man must be seen as one who has energy (dynamics) but who is much

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<sup>9</sup>Tillich, Theology of Culture, pp. 119-20.



more than this. It is necessary to put in the place of Freud's concept at this point Tillich's view of the ontological polarities--which makes room for the possibility of healing and makes possible the use of Freud's approach alongside other approaches.

Another implication of Freud's theory is that the regaining of health is basically a tension reduction process. The energy finds a suitable path for its expression and tension is reduced, health is restored.

This does not give adequate account of the anxieties that remain after the analyst has done his work. It does not account, in other words, for existential anxiety. Nor does it account for the motivation of self-actualization--which self-actualization is done in spite of the fact that it results in an increase of anxiety.

The tension reducing implication of Freud's theory must be seen as helping to draw the limits to the use of Freud's theories. To be specific, Freud's approach is used to reduce pathological anxieties as they have to do with the ontological polarity of dynamics and form. This is the function of therapy based upon Freud's theories and it is in connection with this function that his theories should be used.

### 3. BEING AND NONBEING

In order to use Freud's insights in connection with

the insights of Tillich one might see the parents as symbols of being and nonbeing for the child. They convey to him both the power that unites dynamics and form and that which tends to disrupt their unity. It is through them that the anxieties of fate, guilt and meaninglessness make their appearance in the life of the child and cause him to want to deny his finitude, and to find ways of protecting himself from the anxieties of nonbeing by limiting his being. His symptoms, then, are compromises between anxiety and courage. As such they express dynamics and form in exactly the kind of compromise that Freud described.

It is not necessary to change Freud's concept of the superego. It is a good description of the way in which the symbols of being and nonbeing become internalized in the child.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Freud's approach is an appropriate way to deal with those pathological anxieties that are primarily related to the disunity in the ontological polarity of dynamics and form. His approach is not adequate to deal with those pathological anxieties that are primarily related to the disunity in the other polarities. Of course, since the polarities interpenetrate, his approach can be helpful in connection with these other polarities. The help, however, is indirect--it is due to the interpenetration.

Nor is his system adequate for dealing with the existential anxieties. He has no concept of essential man as different from existential man. This is partly due to the mechanistic implications of his theory.

These mechanistic aspects are better rejected. Instead, man should be seen ontologically in his essential wholeness. Methods of dealing with man's estrangement from this wholeness should be used in addition to Freud's therapy. Furthermore, other psychologies should be used where appropriate in order to deal adequately with the problems arising from the disunity of the other polarities.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TILLICH AND KAREN HORNEY

Karen Horney was, for many years, an orthodox analyst. She eventually came to feel that Freud's approach was too limiting and she began to branch out in a new direction which lead to important contributions in psychotherapy.

Dr. Tillich and Dr. Horney were close personal friends. When she died it was Tillich who delivered the sermon at her funeral. As will be seen, their theoretical positions are almost as congenial as were the two people themselves.

#### 1. THE ONTOLOGICAL POLARITIES

It is interesting to read Dr. Horney's reinterpretation of Dr. Freud's basic ideas.<sup>1</sup> For example, she says that, in her practice, most cases that looked exactly like what Freud called the oedipus complex are not caused by incestuous sexual problems. An analysis of the situation reveals that, instead, the child sought to allay his basic anxiety by clinging to whichever parent seemed to offer him some security. This might or might not take on sexual coloration. But it does take on the coloration of a

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<sup>1</sup>Karen Horney, New Ways In Psychoanalysis (New York: Norton, 1939).

neurotic dependency. It is possessive, it is characterized by jealousy toward the other parent and it is insatiable in its demands. It looks exactly like the oedipus complex.

Horney's disagreement with Freud at this point is a prototype of what she does with his other concepts and it illustrates her basic disagreement with him. The shift is away from an instinctual orientation to one having to do with interpersonal relationships. As she says, ". . . I see the basic conflict of the neurotic in the fundamentally contradictory attitudes he has acquired toward other persons."<sup>2</sup>

To approach the problem genetically we must go back to what I have called basic anxiety, meaning by this the feeling a child has of being isolated and helpless in a potentially hostile world. A wide range of adverse factors in the environment can produce this insecurity in a child: direct or indirect domination, indifference, erratic behavior, lack of respect for the child's individual needs, lack of real guidance, disparaging attitudes, too much admiration or the absence of it, lack of reliable warmth, having to take sides in parental disagreements, too much or too little responsibility, overprotection, isolation from other children, injustice, discrimination, unkept promises, hostile atmosphere, and so on and so on.<sup>3</sup>

It is this, according to Horney, and not the frustration of instincts, that lays the groundwork for neuroses.

Harassed by these disturbing conditions, the child gropes for ways to keep going, ways to cope with this menacing world. Despite his own weakness and fears he unconsciously shapes his tactics to meet the particular forces operating in his environment. In doing so, he

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<sup>2</sup>Karen Horney, Our Inner Conflicts (New York: Norton, 1945), p. 40.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

develops not only ad hoc strategies but lasting character trends which become part of his personality. I have called these "neurotic trends."<sup>4</sup>

In other words, the neurotic's problem arises because he finds it difficult to maintain his individualization and participation in a world in which this means being bombarded with indifference, disparagement, domination and other dangers to him. He cannot assimilate these impressions into his centered self and still affirm himself. He feels himself to be helpless, and the threat of these impressions seems to be overwhelming. So, he has to find some way to affirm himself in a dangerous world, he must find a way of self-integration. Neurosis is his solution.

The reason for much of the difference between Freud and Horney, then, is obvious. While Freud's theory is a psychology dealing with the ontological polarities of dynamics and form Horney's theory is a psychology dealing with the polarities of individualization and participation. The realization of this is a key to understanding the value and place of Horney's theory in psychotherapy.

That her theory does fit into this ontological polarity is demonstrated by the fact that even intrapersonal problems are seen in these terms. The neurotic cannot assimilate into his centered self those aspects of himself that make him vulnerable. So he creates an ideal

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

self which leaves out these dangerous parts of himself. The person whose solution to interpersonal problems is the search for love cannot participate in his own competence or ambition.

He is his subdued self; he is the stowaway without any rights. In accordance with this attitude he also tends to suppress in himself anything that connotes ambition, vindictiveness, triumph, seeking his own advantage.<sup>5</sup>

One whose solution to the problem of interpersonal relationships is the search for mastery cannot assimilate his own failures and self-doubts. So, he refuses to participate in them by finding some way to keep up the pretense that they do not exist. One whose solution is detachment cannot assimilate his own needs and wishes. He finds a way to deny them so that he will not have to participate in them.

In losing his participation the neurotic loses his centeredness. He tries to participate only in the idealized self until he begins to live in the illusion that this is either his potential or his actual self. His identity at this point is lost. Individualization and participation are, indeed, in a state of disunity.

Since the polarity of individualization and participation have to do with the life process of self-integration and self-disintegration it would be expected that Horney's

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<sup>5</sup>Karen Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth (New York: Norton, 1950), p. 216.

system would emphasize this process instead of that of self-creativity and self-destruction which Freud emphasizes.

This is, in fact, exactly the case. When a child begins using compliance as a strategy for solving his personal problems, it is, as Horney states, an attempt at integration. The integration achieved by this method is an inadequate one because the aggressive and detached trends are still effective and struggling for expression. The person, then, must look for what Horney calls a more comprehensive integration.

He finds the solution in an idealization of himself. In his idealized image he rises above others and escapes from the helpless predicament that makes the inner conflict necessary.

Self-idealization, in its various aspects, is what I suggest calling a comprehensive neurotic solution--i.e., a solution not only for a particular conflict but one that implicitly promises to satisfy all the inner needs that have arisen in an individual at a given time. Moreover, it promises not only a riddance from his painful and unbearable feelings (feeling lost, anxious, inferior, and divided), but in addition an ultimately mysterious fulfillment of himself and his life. No wonder, then, that when he believes he has found such a solution he clings to it for dear life.<sup>6</sup>

This attempted integration does not ultimately succeed. Only a healthy commitment to actualization of the real self is capable of bringing about a genuine integration.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-4.



The neurotic solution results in an ambiguous mixture of integration and disintegration in which the disintegration is predominate.

The disintegrative aspect of the neurotic solution can be seen in the effect it has on human relationships. The presence of arrogant vindictiveness, for example, destroys mutual trust and affection. The detached person, for another example, cannot allow himself to get too involved with other people--with the result that personal relationships disintegrate.

The same disintegration happens in work. The person whose way of handling his interpersonal relationships is through "love" will find his self-effacing tendencies prevent him from doing his best work. He cannot afford to be too successful or too superior. He usually works at a level below his capacity.

The disintegration is also seen in the intrapersonal life of the neurotic. An example of this is what happens to some detached persons in a state of deterioration. They move to the periphery of their lives and invest themselves only in shallow living.

Horney's description of disintegration could be summarized in Tillich's words.

Disintegration means failure to reach or preserve self-integration. This failure can occur in one of two directions. Either it is the inability to overcome a limited, stabilized, and immovable centeredness, in which case there is a center, but a center

which does not have a life process whose content is changed and increased; thus it appears the death of mere self-identity. Or it is the inability to return because of the dispersing power of the manifoldness, in which case there is life, but it is dispersed and weak in centeredness, and it faces the danger of losing its center altogether--the death of mere self-alteration.<sup>7</sup>

There can be little doubt, then, that Karen Horney's psychology is a psychology connected with the ontological polarity of individualization and participation. And what about the other two polarities? She recognizes them but treats them as secondary. As she sees it, the problems in the other polarities are caused by the problems in the polarity of individualization and participation.

## 2. HUBRIS

As has been seen, Tillich considered Freud's concept of libido to be a description of sin as concupiscence. An examination of Karen Horney's system will show that, in it, sin is seen primarily in its aspect as hubris.

Tillich describes hubris as the other side of unbelief (turning away from God). It is the attempt to make one's self the center of one's self and of one's world.

"Its main symptom is that man does not acknowledge his finitude."<sup>8</sup> He tries to identify himself with God.

". . . people have identified their limited goodness with

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<sup>7</sup>Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), III, 33.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., II, 51.

absolute goodness, as for example, the pharisees and their successors in Christianity and in secularism."<sup>9</sup>

This serves the purpose of seeming to hide man's finitude.

No one is willing to acknowledge, in concrete terms, his finitude, his weakness and his errors, his ignorance and his insecurity, his loneliness and his anxiety. And if he is ready to acknowledge them, he makes another instrument of hubris out of his readiness. A demonic structure drives man to confuse natural self-affirmation with destructive self-elevation.<sup>10</sup>

In Horney's system the fear of acknowledging one's finitude, one's weaknesses and faults tends toward the same denial of finitude.

All the drives for glory have in common the reaching out for greater knowledge, wisdom, virtue, or powers than are given to human beings; they all aim at the absolute, the unlimited, the infinite. Nothing short of absolute fearlessness, mastery, or saintliness has any appeal for the neurotic obsessed with the drive for glory. He is therefore the antithesis of the truly religious man. For the latter, only to God are all things possible; the neurotic's version is: nothing is impossible to me.<sup>11</sup>

The other aspects of sin are not absent. Unbelief is, as has been stated, the other side of hubris and hubris cannot be present without it. Concupiscence also goes inevitably with hubris. But, in Horney's approach, concupiscence serves the purpose of hubris. For example, the neurotic might want to know everything (concupiscence), but the purpose in knowing everything is to serve his self-

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., II, 51.

elevation by vindicating his idealized self-image (hubris).

In other words, Karen Horney's system is a brilliant description of the effect of hubris on the ontological polarity of individualization and participation.

### 3. ESSENTIAL MAN

Horney is not closed to the possibility of seeing man in his essential goodness.

In spite of the fact that I consider the fundamental conflict more disruptive than Freud does, my view of the possibility of an eventual solution is more positive than his. According to Freud the basic conflict is universal and in principle cannot be resolved: all that can be done is to arrive at better compromises or at better control. According to my view, the basic neurotic conflict does not necessarily have to arise in the first place and is possible of resolution if it does arise--provided the sufferer is willing to undergo the considerable effort and hardship involved.<sup>12</sup>

Man free of neurotic conflict is not man free from the problem of existential estrangement. These two matters should not be confused. The significant thing about the above quotation is that it shows Horney's approach to be open to Tillich's theories of essential man and his estrangement. She does not offer any solution to man's problem of existential estrangement. But neither does her system get in the way of finding such a solution.

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<sup>12</sup>Horney, Our Inner Conflicts, p. 38.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Karen Horney's system is a good one for dealing with those pathological problems that are particularly connected with the disunity of individualization and participation. Her psychology does not deal directly with those problems that are particularly connected with the other two polarities.

Nor does her approach offer any help for the existential anxieties. Unlike Freud's theory, however, her's does not get in the way at this point. In fact, a therapist trained in Tillich's thought would not find it necessary to make any significant change in her system in order to use it as a part of his therapeutic approach. He would, of course, need to see the significant persons in the neurotic's background as symbolizing being and non-being to the neurotic.

Comparison of Horney and Freud shows the following: She focuses on individualization and participation, he focuses on dynamics and form; she describes hubris, he describes concupiscence; no changes have to be made in her system to reconcile it with Tillich, changes are necessary in Freud's system if it is to be reconciled with Tillich.

## CHAPTER IX

### TILLICH AND ROLLO MAY

Rollo May was a minister before he became a psychoanalyst. It is not surprising, then, that he would come under the influence of Paul Tillich. The fact is that he became a student of Tillich while Tillich was at Union Theological Seminary. Rollo May's attempt to summarize existential psychotherapy<sup>1</sup> shows his kinship with Tillich's thought; but, since this summary is not simply May's thought but is an attempt to summarize the field of existential therapy in general, it shows the closeness of Tillich and the whole field of existential psychology.

Unlike Freud and Horney, May does not present a therapeutic system. Unfortunately, no such system is available in English. The work of Medard Boss, J. F. T. Bugental and others in this general area is valuable but not adequate to give a complete picture.

What May does do is present a summary of the presuppositions on which existential psychotherapy is based. It is with such presuppositions that this study is primarily concerned.

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<sup>1</sup>Rollo May, "Contributions of Existential Psychotherapy," in his Existence (New York: Basic Books, 1958), pp. 37-92.

# 1. THE ONTOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

Rollo May is more open to the whole of human reality than are Freud and Horney. Consequently, he cannot quite so easily be classified as they can be. Nevertheless, it can be said that his emphasis is on the ontological polarity of freedom and destiny.

This is illustrated in the following quotation in which Dr. May is discussing the designing or creating of "world." By the term "world" he means the same thing that Tillich means--a world of meanings.

It is the "openness of world" which chiefly distinguishes man's world from the closed worlds of animals and plants. This does not deny the finiteness of life; we are all limited by death and old age and are subject to infirmities of every sort; The point, rather, is that these possibilities are given within the context of the contingency of existence. In a dynamic sense, indeed, these future possibilities are the most significant aspect of any human being's world. For they are the potentialities with which he builds or designs "world"--a phrase the existential therapists are fond of using.

World is never something static, something merely given which the person then "accepts" or "adjusts to" or "fights." It is rather a dynamic pattern which, so long as I possess self-consciousness, I am in the process of forming and designing. Thus Binswanger speaks of world as "that toward which the existence has climbed and according to which it has designed itself," and goes on to emphasize that whereas a tree or an animal is tied to its "blueprint" in relation to the environment, "human existence not only contains numerous possibilities of modes of being, but is precisely rooted in this manifold potentiality of being."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 60-1.

This, in other words, is what man essentially is--one who, within the limits of his destiny, is free to design his own life. One cannot imagine either Freud or Horney propounding such a theory.

Not only does May propound it but he insists upon it. He criticizes the mechanistic and deterministic approach as dehumanizing to man. It saps his motivation, encourages him to continue passively in his predicament, letting his problems go unsolved. And all of this for a theory that is not true, anyway. There is always that kernel of freedom--if it is no more than the freedom to decide what attitude to take toward one's unavoidable fate.

This is why they [the existentialists] hold that man's existence consists, in the last analysis, of his freedom. Heidegger even goes on (in a fascinating essay) to define truth as freedom. Tillich phrased it beautifully in a recent speech, "Man becomes truly human only at the moment of decision."<sup>3</sup>

This kind of statement makes clear why May can say that the "existential approach puts decision and will back into the center of the picture."<sup>4</sup>

None of this is to be construed to mean that May does not take seriously the problem of drives, of the mechanisms that have a deterministic influence on behavior.

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<sup>3</sup>Rollo May, "The Emergency of Existential Psychology," in his Existential Psychology (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 42.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 43.



These factors are involved and they must be dealt with.

But, he insists that,

. . . in the revealing and exploring of these deterministic forces in the patient's life, the patient is orienting himself in some particular way to the data and thus is engaged in some choice, no matter how seemingly insignificant; is experiencing some freedom, no matter how subtle.<sup>5</sup>

What they say tends to deny this freedom. But, in their practice they "know that sooner or later the patient must make some decisions, learn to take some responsibility for himself."<sup>6</sup>

It seems to be fairly clear, then, that the ontological polarity of freedom and destiny is the central emphasis of Rollo May's existentialist approach. It might be charged that this emphasis is a bit one sided in that it emphasizes freedom more than it emphasizes destiny but destiny certainly is not neglected.

It would be expected that, if this be true, there would be an emphasis on the problem expressed in the life process that is expressed through this polarity--namely, that of self-transcendence and self-profanization. There is, in fact, just such an emphasis (although in reading Rollo May it is a good idea to keep in mind that when he uses the word "transcendence" he means man's capacity for freedom; the element of greatness, dignity, holiness that

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

is at the center of Tillich's use of the term is not involved in May's use of it).

One of his chief objections to reducing man to drives and mechanisms is that this does "reduce" man. It reduces him to something less than the full human being that he is. It dehumanizes him. Again and again Rollo May calls for respect for the primacy of the real live human being who sits before the psychotherapist. He is not to be seen as an object to be analyzed, manipulated, fitted into theories.

I make no apologies in admitting that I take very seriously, as will have been evident already, the dehumanizing dangers in our tendency in modern science to make man over into the image of the machine, into the image of the techniques by which we study him.<sup>7</sup>

Man is prior to theories about man. And if the theories do not fit the individual person who sits before the psychotherapist it is the theories that must change. Dr. May tells about studying written reports--describing test results and mechanisms--on a patient only to discover, when he met the patient, that he was meeting a new person. Reports, he is explaining, can help us know about the person but they cannot help us know the person himself.

This respect for man as man is one of the chief marks of Rollo May's approach. In fact, he considers the loss of one's humanness, one's own sense of being, to be

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

sickness. One is cured only as he regains this sense of being.

This is not surprising in the light of his concern with the polarity of freedom and destiny.

It is appropriate now to raise the question of whether he makes a place for the other polarities. The answer to the question is that he does make a place for them but that it is difficult to know just how this place relates to that of freedom and destiny. In the modes of being-in-the-world he lists three (which he takes from Binswanger), the umwelt (which has to do with drives, instincts, the environment), the mitwelt (which is somewhat similar to Tillich's concept of individualization and participation), and eigenwelt (which has to do with man's relationship with himself). It is the concept of eigenwelt that deals with what happens in man when he sees a new insight and the gestalt of his life shifts. This is a good description of what Tillich means when he writes about growth, the forming of new centers. But this does not mean that eigenwelt is to be equated with dynamics and form. Umwelt is somewhat closer to Tillich's idea of dynamics and form (May says umwelt is the area of Freud's special concern). It might be fair to say that what Tillich means by dynamics and form and the life process of growth and destruction that goes with it has some similarities with what May means by the combined concepts of umwelt and

eigenwelt. The key word here is "similarity," the concepts should not be equated.

The point being made here is that, like Freud and Horney, Rollo May tends to place one ontological polarity in the forefront and to place the other two in a secondary position.

## 2. BEING AND NONBEING

Rollo May, like Paul Tillich, sees the struggle of life as that between being and nonbeing. He also sees the connection between this struggle and the problem of anxiety in the same way that Tillich sees it. May says, "Anxiety is the experience of the threat of immanent nonbeing."<sup>8</sup> Man's problem is that of whether to affirm himself in the face of this anxiety. If he fails to affirm himself he becomes guilty.

Up to this point Rollo May reads like Tillich. But at this point differences become noticeable. Rollo May speaks of guilt as something different from anxiety. He does not see, as Tillich does, that guilt is one of the anxieties through which nonbeing confronts us. The fact is that he makes no systematic analysis of nonbeing--nonbeing confronts man through death, through conformism, through a friend passing him on the street without speaking. These are excellent examples of nonbeing but they do not

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<sup>8</sup>May, Existence, p. 50.

give the reader a systematic presentation of the problem.

Nor does he give a clear picture of the structures of being. Being refers, he says, to the source of potentiality. But he does not spell this out in any complete and systematic way. The concepts of umwelt, mitwelt and eigenwelt are helpful but they are not adequate substitutes for Tillich's descriptions of the ontological polarities.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Rollo May does not present a therapeutic system as do Freud and Horney. Instead, he presents a stance toward therapy; or, it might be even more accurate to say, a stance toward man. This stance and the presuppositions that go with it are primarily concerned with the ontological polarity of freedom and destiny. His theories are heavily influenced by Tillich but are not adequately thought out or systematized.

Because of these factors Rollo May's theories do not do in the area of freedom and destiny what Horney does in individualization and participation or what Freud does in the area of dynamics and form. What he does do is give one a stance from which to view the other therapy systems and to modify them if need be.

This seems to be the best use of Rollo May's theories and is, in fact, in accord with his own claim that the existentialist approach is more of an attitude toward therapy than it is a therapy system.

There is, however, another factor that should influence the use of his theories. That is the fact that, while he is heavily influenced by Tillich, his theories are no match for Tillich's either in terms of completeness or organization. This suggests that the best use of Rollo May is as a supplement to Tillich's own system. It is a source of illustrations, explanations, and of the spelling out of some of the implications of Tillich's thought. Rollo May's approach is not a substitute for Tillich's system, nor is it an adequate competitor. It is, however, a valuable additional tool for one who is already aware of the value of Tillich's insights.

## CHAPTER X

### TILLICH AND DOLLARD AND MILLER

The work of John Dollard and Neal E. Miller is somewhat representative of what is happening in American universities and in American mental hospitals. The general orientation in these institutions is "scientific" in that it attempts to imitate, as closely as possible, the natural sciences. Their model is experimental psychology.

Dollard and Miller are a part of this general orientation. Their special area is that of learning theory.

#### 1. THE LOSS OF THE ONTOLOGICAL

Dollard and Miller do their work primarily in the area of the ontological polarity of dynamics and form. It is, however, not important to spend time studying this facet of their thinking. Freud does a much more profound job of analyzing some of the pathological problems that arise in this area.

A much more important problem involved in the work of Dollard and Miller is the loss of the awareness of the ontological realities. This loss is not peculiar to Dollard and Miller. Indeed, it is true in varying degrees in every school of psychology except that of

existentialism. It was pointed out in the chapter on Freud that he lacked an awareness of the essential nature of man, confining himself to man as he is in his existential estrangement. In fact, his theory, at points, precludes a genuine understanding of man in his essential nature. Horney, on the other hand, was seen to be open to the essential element although she did not theorize about this element.

It is not only in psychology that the loss of the awareness of the ontological is a problem. It is, in fact, a problem in our society as a whole. As is to be expected, it is those in the various fields of the arts who tend to be most sensitive to this fact and to its effects. As Edmund Fuller says, "There were times, in this century and the previous one, when the disintegration of society was a major theme of the writer. Today it is the disintegration of the individual creature himself--of man."<sup>1</sup>

The loss of an adequate image of man is, of course, only one aspect of this problem. It is also the loss of an image of man's world; it is a loss of an understanding of the nature and depth of man's predicament.

One of the ways of looking at the overall problem is to see it as a loss of an awareness of both being and non-being. This loss in the theory of Dollard and Miller can,

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<sup>1</sup>Edmund Fuller, Man In Modern Fiction (New York: Random House, 1949), p. 3.



perhaps, be illustrated by the case of a woman they call Mrs. A.

Mrs. A. was a beautiful twenty three year old married woman. She was afraid to leave the house alone, she felt that she had to keep counting her heart beats, otherwise, her heart would stop beating. She had, after five months of this, exasperated her friends and her husband (who had threatened to divorce her) and was lonely, hopeless and helpless.

The therapist discovered that she had been an orphan and had been raised by foster parents. The foster mother was very domineering and hostile. Mrs. A. said, "She whipped me all the time--whether I'd done anything or not."<sup>2</sup> She also taught the girl that sex was wrong and dirty. At the same time, the environment was such that her sex drive was stimulated.

At the time she came to the therapist she was under the domination of her mother-in-law who was critical of her and had rejected her. She spoke in glowing terms when she discussed this mother-in-law with the therapist.

According to Dollard and Miller she had two conflicts. One was a sex-fear conflict. Because she had developed a strong sex drive and, at the same time, a fear about sex as something dirty she found herself in a

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<sup>2</sup>John Dollard and Neal Miller, Personality and Psychotherapy (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1950), p. 17.

conflict every time she was in a situation where sex was likely to be stimulated. This explains her fear of going out alone. There was the fear that someone would wink at her or smile at her or admire her. This would stimulate her sex feelings and raise the danger of adultery. The fact that this might happen created anxiety in her each time she went out. So, the only way to avoid the anxiety was to avoid going out.

Sex feelings arose, however, at other times as well. To protect herself at these times she had developed the fear of her heart stopping if she didn't count her heart beats. Counting the heart beats occupied her attention and made it impossible for her to have her mind on sex.

Another, not so severe, conflict was between aggression and fear. She was understandably angry with her mother-in-law but, at the same time, afraid to express her anger. When she gained the courage to express some of her anger with her mother-in-law this problem disappeared.

The other conflict was handled through the symptoms. The symptoms helped her to avoid the conflict and, thereby, reduced the anxiety caused by the conflict. The symptoms were, therefore, a way to avoid anxiety. Since they were successful, Mrs. A. "learned" to produce the symptoms every time there was any danger of her becoming aware of sex feelings.

This, according to Dollard and Miller, is how a person learns to be neurotic.

From the standpoint of a student of Tillich, this theory is usable but very limited. Dollard and Miller concentrate on the "how" of learning but do not give an adequate account of the person who is doing the learning nor of what he is learning. They cannot give such an account because they do not understand being and nonbeing. If being and nonbeing are taken into consideration in the analysis of this case, the result is not so much different as it is more complete and more profound.

The sex-fear conflict was a conflict between being and nonbeing. The sexual stimulation intensified the disunity of the polarity of dynamics and form. Dynamics was represented partly by the sexual drive while form was represented partly by the repressive norm instilled by her foster mother. One would expect the disunity of this polarity to lead to destructive behavior; and, indeed, it did. She was sexually unresponsive toward her husband and, at the same time, she would do things like going out on drinking parties with other girls or hitching rides with a truck driver--thereby putting herself in a position of being very vulnerable to seduction.

There was also disunity in the polarity of individualization and participation. She was unable to assimilate into her centeredness the sights and sounds of

public places because these were likely to stimulate the sex drive. Stimulation of the sex drive put her in danger of seduction; thereby, endangering her individualization by pushing her away from the centeredness (home and marriage) of her life to the periphery (sex for sex's sake) of it. She was threatened, in other words, with disintegration.

She was also threatened with self-profanization through the loss of both freedom and destiny. Freedom was obviously in danger of becoming arbitrary (for example, hitching rides with truck drivers) and she was in danger of losing touch with her destiny (for example, her husband was threatening to divorce her). The loss of self-esteem that she suffered testified to the fact that self-profanization had reached an uncomfortable point.

Her symptoms, then, were ways to prevent further destruction, disintegration and self-profanization. They were, in other words signs of health as well as signs of unhealth. They were a compromise between the health that she desperately wanted but did not have the courage to claim and the unhealth that she did not want but feared was inevitable. They were compromises between self-affirmation and self-negation.

One implication of this is that the power of being--that is, the push toward creativity, integration and transcendence--is present and strong enough to make itself felt though the symptoms. This power of being is a push

toward health that can be mobilized and can aid in the girl's recovery.

Another implication is that the problem is a much larger problem than that of a conflict between sex and fear. The girl's total life is at stake--her power to grow and mature, her power to integrate her life around some meaningful center, her self-esteem.

It hardly makes sense to try to derive all of this problem from the sex-fear conflict. Indeed, Dollard and Miller point out that there is another conflict between aggression and fear. In many cases, they say, there are, at any given moment, several such conflicts operating in various strengths.

There is a cohesion to such a multiplicity of conflicts if they are seen as expressions of one single conflict--that of being and nonbeing. Or perhaps, it might be more accurate to say the conflict is that between self-affirmation and self-negation in the face of nonbeing. At any rate, the struggle between being and nonbeing and the question of whether one can affirm himself "in spite of" the nonbeing is the basic conflict in life and it is the conflict in the case of Mrs. A. The sex-fear conflict and the aggression-fear conflict are not two different conflicts as Dollard and Miller suggest. They are two expressions of the same conflict.

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Seeing the conflict in this way makes understandable the fact that the neurosis so pervades Mrs. A's total life, threatening her integration, growth and self-esteem. It also makes it understandable that she would be willing to tolerate such painful symptoms. The threat is a threat of the loss of being. It is a threat of destruction of her life, a threat of nonbeing. The symptoms are a desperate attempt to avoid the despair of such loss.

Turning now from the person who is doing the learning to the content of what the person is learning Tillich's thought again broadens and deepens the theories of Dollard and Miller.

They point out that Mrs. A. learned her fear of sex from the foster mother who "whipped" her all the time and taught her that sex was dirty. Sex feelings, then, became the cue that triggered anxiety. This is as far as Dollard and Miller go. They do not, in other words, say what is behind the anxiety that the cue triggers. Seemingly the foster mother's treatment of Mrs. A. is expected to be an adequate explanation.

One of the results of this limitation is that, while they discuss the neurotic guilt Mrs. A. suffered they do not deal with the sense of helplessness which Mrs. A. reports. This sense of helplessness is as important as the neurotic guilt and, in fact, the guilt cannot be resolved unless she is able to deal with the helplessness.

This can be understood if one pictures the weakness of the foster child trying to cope with the seemingly overwhelming strength of a woman who was very domineering and who beat her whether she had done anything or not. In this childhood Mrs. A. received an overly thorough education in the meaning of fate and of her own finite vulnerability to it. The actions of the foster mother did not fit a meaning bearing pattern to the child (since they were not related to the child's behavior), it is likely that they were unpredictable since they were dependent upon the subjective mood of the foster mother. Finally, the girl's contingency was laid bare by the attacks. The attacks fit very well into Tillich's definition of fate.

It would be understandable if this constant reminder of her finitude through the anxiety of fate would be more than she could take into her self-affirmation. This would mean that she would not be able to affirm the unity of dynamics and form. To do so would "cue" the anxiety of fate--in Dollard and Miller's theory. In Tillich's terms one could say that sex impulses had come to symbolize fate and the overwhelming anxiety its awareness brings. To escape from this predicament she would devise some kind of unrealistic security.

A similar result would come from the overwhelming guilt. Being responsible for sex impulses and having no better help with them than the teaching that they are

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dirty--and this coming from the woman who symbolizes the power of fate--would make it extremely difficult to accept this responsibility into her self-affirmation. She would, as a result of this, tend to develop an unrealistic perfectionism.

The symptoms would serve both the unrealistic security and the unrealistic perfectionism.

The confusion in which Mrs. A. was living at the time she came for therapy indicates that there was also a lot of doubt or meaninglessness in her life. Not enough is known about the case, however, to analyze the way this anxiety first reached her.

This analysis explains why the treatment by the foster mother was so devastating in its effect. It was a reminder to the young girl of her finitude--the anxiety of fate confronted her with the possibility of death, the anxiety of guilt confronted her with the possibility of total self-rejection, and the anxiety of emptiness confronted her with the possibility of total meaninglessness.

With the threat of nonbeing so heavily involved in the foster mother's treatment of the young girl it is understandable that this treatment would have such devastating results in the life of the girl.

The use of Tillich's insights concerning being and nonbeing has not changed Dollard and Miller's theory about how Mrs. A. "learned" her symptoms. Rather the use of



Tillich's thought broadens the understanding of the case by making it possible to understand the strength behind the neurosis and by making it possible to understand the extent of its effect on Mrs. A. The extent of its effect on Mrs. A. is seen by taking into consideration the ontological polarities. The strength of the neurotic drive is seen in the realization that it is a desperate attempt to ward off nonbeing.

## 2. CONFRONTING NONBEING IN THE POWER OF BEING

In therapy Dollard and Miller help the counselee to confront the very things that tend to arouse anxiety in him and to take a more workable approach in the handling of the anxiety. An example, is seen in Mrs. A's handling of her mother-in-law. Instead of avoiding the anxiety by avoiding conflict Mrs. A. began to let her anger be known. The therapist helped her to do this by supporting her right to have anger and by reminding her that she was in a stronger position than she realized. After all she had the love of the mother-in-law's son and she would bear her mother-in-law's grandchildren. If the mother-in-law wanted to be included in the life of the son and grandchildren she had better take a better attitude toward Mrs. A.

When Mrs. A. began to express her resentment toward the mother-in-law she discovered that the mother-in-law would tolerate more from her than she had realized. In

this way the mother-in-law became less a danger signal to Mrs. A. The anxiety began to recede.

This fits into Tillich's thought in a striking way. The mother-in-law was able to produce anxiety in Mrs. A. because in some way she activated the memories and images of nonbeing. Mrs. A. was able to accept this anxiety into her self-affirmation when she was grasped by the power of being. This happened when she became aware that she was in a stronger position with regard to her mother-in-law than she realized and when she became aware, through the therapist, that her anger was acceptable to the ground of being--that is to say, when she became aware that her anger would not cut her off from self-integration, self-creativity and self-transcendence but was in fact a necessary part of these.

The same kind of analysis can be applied to the talking part of therapy in which Dollard and Miller try to help the counselee to relive traumatic experiences by talking about them. The counselees are, in doing this, confronting nonbeing in the power of being.

One can see, then, that the actual process of therapy as practiced by Dollard and Miller is quite congenial to Tillich's theories.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Dollard and Miller concentrate on the "how" of learning. Tillich's insights on the nature of the person

doing the learning and on the struggle between being and nonbeing (which is the "what" of the person's learning) expand and enrich Dollard and Miller's approach.

This might be turned the other way around by saying that Dollard and Miller give valuable help on the clinical use of Tillich's theories. Their methods of therapy are designed to help the client do exactly what, according to Tillich's theories, he must do in order to get well. Their approach is, therefore, a valuable tool for the therapist who takes seriously Tillich's insights and wishes to use them in psychotherapy.

## CHAPTER XI

### TILLICH AND ERIC BERNE

Eric Berne has caught the imagination not only of a part of the community of professional psychotherapists but of the general public. His book Games People Play became a bestseller. People easily recognized themselves and their friends in his description of the various ways in which human beings try to get some of the satisfactions of intimacy without experiencing the dangers of intimacy itself.

It seems worthwhile to explore the relationship between these games in which people recognize their daily lives and the profound theories of Paul Tillich. This is particularly true in the light of the fact that there is an incompleteness about Berne's theories which leaves a void that Tillich's insights fill.

#### 1. EXISTENTIAL ANXIETY

Berne's system is a way of describing how people defend themselves. This is true of his structural analysis as well as of his transactional analysis. Unfortunately, he has surprisingly little to say about the nature of the threat against which they are defending themselves. In discussing pathogenesis he names traumatic experiences as the cause of pathology. In discussing games he points to

the difficulties surrounding intimacy as the problem.

Hence, after the period of close intimacy with the mother is over, the individual for the rest of his life is confronted with a dilemma upon whose horns his destiny and survival are continually being tossed. One horn is the social, psychological and biological forces which stand in the way of continued physical intimacy in the infant style; the other is his perpetual striving for its attainment. Under most circumstances he will compromise.<sup>1</sup>

The games that people play are the compromises that they design.

Neither of these explanations explains very much. They are analogous to saying that a patient with a physical illness is ill because he was infected with germs. This is not untrue--but neither is it enough.

Tillich's thought gives a way of understanding the nature of the threat from which people defend themselves by playing games.

An example will illustrate this. One of the games that Dr. Berne has uncovered is called "Look How Hard I've Tried." He describes this game as it is frequently played by couples who are in psychotherapy. One member of the couple, perhaps the husband, wants a divorce but insists loudly that he wants to make a success of the marriage. The wife is more sincere in her desire to make the marriage work.

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<sup>1</sup>Eric Berne, Games People Play (New York: Grove Press, 1964), p. 14.

The man and his wife both come to the therapist. The husband gives the appearance of being very cooperative in therapy and, at home, he starts being much nicer to his wife. But this behavior soon changes, he is worse than ever at home and he loses interest in therapy. When he starts going fishing instead of keeping his therapy appointments his wife files for a divorce. The husband, then, can say to his friends, "Look how hard I've tried. I went to therapy, I tried being very nice to her. Nothing seemed to work."

There are certain advantages in the husband's going about his divorce in this way. If he simply files for a divorce he has to take responsibility for this action--in the eyes of his friends as well as in his own eyes. But by insisting that he does not want the divorce and by going into therapy and putting up a semblance of being cooperative he expects to convince his friends and the judge and the attorney that he is not responsible. After all, who can blame him after he's tried so hard? In fact, he hopes to convince even himself.

This is where Dr. Berne and Dr. Tillich meet. The game is played, according to Berne, in order to reap the satisfactions which includes a way of evading responsibility without accepting the guilt for evading that responsibility. One who understands Tillich is aware of the tremendous drive behind the game. If the husband

accepts responsibility for what he has done and/or is doing to his own life--responsibility for the destructiveness, disintegration and profanization--he is in danger of rejecting himself. Self-rejection is extremely painful. It is easier to blame his wife and reject her.

The game is, therefore, an attempt to avoid an ultimate self-negation and secure a self-affirmation, even though it is a limited self-affirmation.

This analysis expands Berne's theory and, at the same time, makes it intelligible. It makes no sense to say, as Berne does, that games are played to avoid intimacy and, then, to demonstrate that a given game is played to avoid guilt. Guilt and intimacy do not necessarily go together. There has to be some understanding as to which is prior.

It could hardly be said that intimacy is prior. Since when does intimacy cause guilt? Guilt is just as prevalent in the lack of intimacy as in intimacy.

The relationship between guilt and intimacy is that in some people intimacy arouses the awareness of guilt and that guilt--if it is not accepted--prevents genuine intimacy. The truth in Berne's contention that game players are avoiding intimacy is that intimacy is a context in which their existential anxieties bother them. It is the existential anxieties that they are avoiding by avoiding intimacy.

This fact opens Berne's theories in another direction. That is that intimacy is not the only context in which man's existential anxieties are aroused. It would be expected, then, that man plays games in order to avoid other contexts as well.

The use of Tillich's theories on anxiety also makes intelligible Berne's idea that traumatic experiences are pathogenic. It is in these experiences that the power of nonbeing is felt so strongly that a rigid unrealistic defense is devised to handle it. It is precisely the traumatic or overwhelming nature of this experience that causes the person to hang on to the particular defense. He does not wish to reopen the question. He does not want to take a chance on ever facing that much nonbeing again. If the defense devised to handle this anxiety is a game, that game will have a somewhat tenacious hold on the player.

All of this indicates that Tillich's theories give an ontological foundation to Berne's discoveries. Tillich makes Berne intelligible while Berne's work makes some of Tillich's ideas explicit by giving them concrete form. It would be fair to say that Berne needs Tillich. Of the eleven games for which Berne gives a more or less complete analysis eight of them are designed to handle guilt, two are designed to handle fate. The other one was what Berne calls a "good" game. It had no ulterior motive.



## 2. CONCLUSION

To the therapist who uses Berne's concepts and is satisfied with the results of his concepts, the foregoing analysis might seem to be interesting but unimportant. But to the therapist who uses the concepts only to find that sometimes people can recognize their games but seem incapable of giving them up, it might seem quite important. It is not enough that the therapist dismiss these people by claiming that they are playing "Psychiatry" or "Wooden Leg." It might be that the therapist is the one who is playing the game--designed to protect him from his sense of helplessness (fate), his responsibility for the failure of therapy (guilt), the awareness that Berne's theories are inadequate (meaninglessness).

The fact is that Berne does not have an adequate theory of what makes people sick nor of what it takes to make them whole again. The therapist who uses Berne's concepts needs Tillich's insights to guide him in these areas.

### PART III

#### CHAPTER XII

##### BEING, NONBEING AND ANXIETY

It is needful at this point to begin demonstrating that Tillich's concepts have a validity in their own right. The conflict between being and nonbeing is a good place to start.

As has been stated earlier, Tillich asserts that anxiety is the awareness of nonbeing--not nonbeing as an abstract principle but as the actual possibility of "my" not being. This seems to (but does not) contradict Rollo May's claim that anxiety arises because some new potentiality (being) is struggling for birth. It is the possibility of the emergence of being that causes us to be in danger of facing nonbeing. It is the nonbeing mixed in with the being that triggers the anxiety.

A few clinical examples will illustrate Tillich's point.

Mrs. Harley was a 41 year old woman with a ninth grade education. She had come to the church sponsored counseling center after realizing that she was losing the courage to go outside her house. If she went to church she found herself suffering from anxiety and a strong desire to

run. If she went shopping to any but the corner grocery store she had the same feelings. She had no friends and saw no one outside her immediate family except her sisters with whom she was not on particularly good terms.

After a few months at the counseling center she was able to join a club where she could make some friends. She found to her surprise that she was accepted by the other members and was eventually given some leadership responsibilities. Her anxieties disappeared and she was able to move freely about the city. Furthermore, she enrolled in a night school where she studied psychology and theology. She proved to be an outstanding student, read avidly from Paul Tillich's systematic theology as well as from the works of Reinhold Niebuhr and Rudolf Bultmann.

She improved so well that she was able to leave counseling on a trial basis. After several months she returned. The anxieties had returned although not so severe as they had been before. In addition, however, she began discussing some occult religious ideas concerning methods of mind control and the use of extra sensory perception. These were so far removed from her theological sophistication that the counselor expressed his surprise. She readily admitted the radical departure from her former thought but, at the same time, defended the ideas tenaciously. She tried to maneuver the therapist into endorsing the ideas. When he refused to do so and

reminded her that she herself was aware of the fact that they bordered on the magical and the superstitious, she admitted as much but still asked the counselor to endorse them.

When questioned as to the onset of these ideas she revealed that her family was facing a small financial crisis. She had handled this, at first, in her usual way of calling attention to the fact that her lack of training made it impossible for her to get a job and help to ease the financial strain. A neighbor, however, had discovered that a nearby college, in order to ease a nursing shortage, had decided to offer a twelve month training course for practical nurses. The neighbor, who was not a high school graduate, had enrolled in the course and had told Mrs. Harley her good news.

The neighbor, who knew nothing of Mrs. Harley's financial problem, had no way of knowing that her good news was bad news to Mrs. Harley. But Mrs. Harley checked with the college and discovered that her ninth grade education would not disqualify her; soon after she began to feel the old symptoms return.

Further discussion revealed that Mrs. Harley had always harbored a secret desire to work in a hospital or a doctor's office. This training would make possible the fulfillment of this ambition.

Furthermore, she had long wanted to go to the opera and to museums and concerts. She had fantasies about attending these while, at the same time, she saw this as something impossible. These activities were for other people, people who were a part of a world from which she felt cut off.

The money that she could make as a nurse would, however, open this world to her.

The nurse's training, in other words, gave her a chance to live the very life that she had always wanted to live. It gave her the chance to be--to integrate her secret desires into her centeredness, to grow beyond her childlike helplessness and provincial backwardness, to experience her own dignity in a free decision to go into training (a decision that was offered by the unity of freedom and destiny).

It would be expected that she would be delighted with this turn of events. Instead, she became depressed and the old symptoms began to creep back into her life--along with the bizarre occult ideas.

It was not difficult, however, to understand why she should react the way she did. She had grown up in a rural area where her family belonged to a small church that practiced footwashing, divine healing and speaking in tongues. The church was also very strict in its insistence that its members remain uncorrupted by the "evil world"

around them. They were expected to separate themselves from the world. They were not to wear cosmetics, dance, attend motion pictures, wear bathing suits or other sexy clothing. They looked askance at physicians and used their belief in divine healing to discourage any of the members from going to physicians any more often than absolutely necessary. Furthermore, they had a prejudice against successful people--looking upon them as being somehow impure.

Mrs. Harley's mother had been a very domineering woman who insisted that her children be faithful to the church. The father was a weak man who supported the mother. Mrs. Harley had, as a child, been "chosen" by both her family and the church as a particularly "religious" girl. She had tried hard to fill this role and got some of her few satisfactions in her early life from doing this.

As a teenager she began trying to break away from this narrow world and become a part of the world at large. She began wearing lipstick and attending movies. In her late teens she even managed to get a job in a hospital.

But she discovered that she felt very inadequate in coping with the world at large. She explained that she had not learned the rituals of social intercourse that most people take for granted. Her few attempts at flirting with men she wanted to date were clumsy and unsuccessful. She

was not much more successful at making friends with girls she met. She was a wallflower.

Furthermore, because of her lack of training she was confined to unskilled jobs. Most of the time she worked as a domestic servant. Every effort to better herself was blocked by her low educational level and every attempt served only to remind her of her inadequacy.

It is easy to see that nonbeing confronted her strongly in the form of the anxiety of fate. The anxiety of meaninglessness was also present because of the strong doubt about the validity of her religious beliefs and of the religious role she had played in her childhood. Guilt was present in her awareness that she was not living up to her potential.

As a result of this anxiety she made a compromise. She married a member of her former church who was, himself, sufficiently skeptical that he would not insist on her participation in it. Then, they both moved to another state. This retreat was followed by other retreats until she reached the point of realizing that she had to have help.

Now, with the financial pressure pushing her and the chance to enter nurse's training pulling her she had before her the possibility of throwing away the compromise and reclaiming the life that she had forfeited.

But to do this was like going into uncharted territory where she would lose her way again. She had known the anxiety of this problem once. She did not want to live through it again. The insecurity of trying to find her way through nurse's training, and from there into the world of those who attend operas and concerts and visit museums was overwhelming to her. In addition there was the fact that, if she was successful, it would be admitting that she could have done something like this earlier and that many of the wasted years of her life were partly her own responsibility. The guilt connected with this was not easy to face.

So, the return of the anxiety was due to the fact that the chance to go into nurse's training faced her with nonbeing in the form of guilt and intense insecurity (fate).

It was to avoid this anxiety that she became interested in the religious cult. It promised to give her control over her mind so she wouldn't have to think about the opportunity that had been placed before her. She could believe the excuses she was always inventing ("I don't have any transportation," etc.) and, thereby let this opportunity slip by--avoiding the insecurity and quieting her guilt with the excuses.

When she was able to accept this anxiety into her self-affirmation the neurotic symptoms disappeared. She enrolled in the course and experienced the insecurity and



the guilt. As she was able to affirm herself "in spite of" the anxiety she became stronger and the anxiety bothered her less and less. She was able to finish the course and begin participating in the cultural activities that had always had such an appeal to her. She also learned something about clothing and hair styles. A couple of years after her decision to go into nurse's training no one who saw her or talked to her would have guessed that she had grown up a culturally deprived child with only a ninth grade education.

Another case will show that what happened with Mrs. Harley is not unique.

Pearl was a twenty-five year old college graduate who felt that life was passing her by. She was right. Her friends were either getting married or getting launched in careers that they really wanted while she was drifting along in a job that she did not like and that was below her level of competence. She seldom dated and, when she did, she insisted on paying her part of the check and she did not want the man to kiss her. If she thought a man was beginning to like her she would quit dating him. She could only enjoy dates with men who were not interested in her.

In counseling it was revealed that her father had wanted a son when she was born. He compensated for his disappointment by treating her like a son. He taught her

to change the spark plugs on a car, discussed the family's financial affairs with her instead of discussing them with her mother and encouraged her to wear bluejeans.

Pearl envied her sister who spent money on fashion magazines and clothes while Pearl used all her own money to buy books. The sister enjoyed dating and kept a busy social schedule while Pearl did more "responsible" things.

Eventually, the father recognized his mistake and hesitantly encouraged Pearl to be more feminine. But by this time, the damage had already been done. Understandably she had mixed feelings. Her anxiety when she was on a date caused her to be hesitant. At the same time she had fantasies that a man would refuse to take her seriously when she began to avoid him. She had fantasies in which she and a man liked each other and she began to turn him down when he asked for a date, but he continued to ask. Then she became sarcastic with him and he told her that he was not fooled by the sarcasm and that he was going to keep on until she stopped turning him down. At this point in her fantasies she would happily surrender.

The fact is that this fantasy had come true in all its details and she found that she could not surrender. It was this that had caused her to decide to go into psychotherapy.

A breakthrough in her therapy came when she timidly told the therapist that she had read her sister's fashion

magazines. The therapist reacted by saying, "So, you have known all along that you are really feminine. Even though your father tried to make a son of you and even though you've learned to do masculine things like changing the spark plugs on a car you know down deep inside that you're really a girl."

At this point she began to cry softly. Other stories revealing her femininity followed. Gradually she became aware of the strength of the feminine potential that was struggling to come to birth. This awareness is what Tillich calls being grasped by the power of being. In the power of being she was able to accept dates with her boyfriend, she stopped paying her part of the check and felt comfortable about, and found that she really enjoyed kissing.

Her depression lifted. She gained in self-confidence and began to buy more feminine clothes. But in a few weeks the depression returned. When she came to her counseling sessions she was dressed carelessly as she had been when she first began counseling. She had fantasies of moving to another city where nobody knew her but she realized that this would not really solve anything.

For several sessions counseling was difficult. She reported no dreams. When the counselor probed into her feelings she would say only that she was depressed and didn't know why. She felt helpless to do anything about

her problem and wasn't sure she wanted to continue her therapy.

Finally, the therapist asked her if there was a decision that she was avoiding. She answered that her family and some friends wanted to meet her boyfriend. But she did not want to introduce him to them because she saw this as a commitment to being his girl friend. It was one thing to be feminine on her dates with him. It was quite another thing to announce it to the world by letting herself be identified in her friends' minds as his girl friend.

This was, of course, a new potentiality struggling for birth. It was the possibility of being, and a result of its emergence was anxiety.

The reason was not hard to understand. Her father had tried to teach her to be independent. Instead of giving her an allowance he had devised ways that she could earn her own money. At an early age she had been required to buy her own clothes.

On the other hand, her father was quite free about leaning on her. He confided in her about his personal as well as his professional problems, he expected her to take care of some of the paper work connected with his job and expected her to help "take care of" her mother. She learned that, if she ever tried to lean on him he would inevitably turn the tables on her by telling her his troubles or asking her to do some kind of favor for him.

In other words, her dependency needs brought her up against the anxiety of fate. So, she had tried to become independent in order to keep a safe distance between herself and her father--or any other man.

To commit herself publicly to being a girl would be to admit that she needed her boyfriend. She felt that, once she did this, he would start leaning on her and she would be trapped again. This nonbeing in the form of fate was included in the being that was present in the possibility of introducing her boyfriend to her family and friends.

Both of these examples have demonstrated the basic conflict and the way in which anxiety arises from it. The power of being makes possible the actualization of some potential. But to actualize this potential is to be confronted by nonbeing. The awareness of the nonbeing causes anxiety and raises seriously the question whether we dare to affirm our essential humanity "in spite of" the nonbeing. Our answers to this question are the most important decisions of our lives.

## CHAPTER XIII

### EXISTENTIAL AND PATHOLOGICAL ANXIETY

Tillich asserts that if one does not affirm himself "in spite of" the existential anxiety created by the awareness of nonbeing he develops pathological anxiety. The type of pathological anxiety developed depends upon the type of existential anxiety against which one is defending himself.

#### 1. UNREALISTIC SECURITY

The failure to affirm one's essential being "in spite of" the existential anxiety of fate and death results in pathological anxiety in the form of an unrealistic security. A clinical example will illustrate this.

Bob was 23 years old, 6 feet 3 inches tall, and a part time graduate student working on his master's degree. He supported himself by doing substitute teaching.

When he started therapy he reported that he was sleeping until noon most days, missing classes and failing to write most of his assignments. He was turning down most of the chances to substitute teach and as a result he was broke and in debt to his roommate.

He spent a lot of his time daydreaming. His daydreams always followed the same pattern. He was, in the dream, confronted by some great danger but through

overwhelming strength he overcame his adversaries and became a hero to a large group of girls who were always present to witness his great deed.

Encouraged to daydream during the counseling session he imagined that he was riding a motorcycle with his girl friend when they were confronted by a gang of toughs. The toughs overcame him and were about to kill him when he said, "No, I can't let that happen." He stiffened and leaned forward in his seat and stated that with a great exertion he had overcome them. Now the girl was kneeling beside him admiring him for his bravery and strength. They went to the hospital to get his wounds treated and, at the hospital, met another gang. This gang, which was larger than the first overcame him and were about to kill him when he began talking rapidly about defeating them. When he could picture them lying helpless about him he shifted the scene. He was not in a hospital bed surrounded by admiring girls.

When it was pointed out that he didn't describe how he defeated the two gangs he admitted that he did not really know how he defeated them. The therapist pointed out the obvious fact that his defeat of them was forced, that it was not the way his imagination would have gone if he had left it alone to do its own dreaming. The heroic effort, then, was an attempt to escape from what he was really imagining--his own defeat and death.

Bob recognized the truth of this and reported that, sometimes, he had to have two or three such daydreams before he could go to sleep at night. They were ways of quieting the gnawing anxiety of his sense of helplessness and smallness in a frightening world where everyone else seemed to be "ten feet tall" and he seemed to be "two feet tall." It was an attempt, in other words, to avoid the anxiety of fate and death.

Other symptoms yielded to a similar analysis. He would, for example, go to a favorite bar and have a few drinks and imagine that the other people present respected him. The desire to do this was particularly strong when he had some kind of defeating experience like failing to get a class assignment done on time or being reminded of how little money he was making or being turned down by a girl he had asked for a date.

His dating life filled the same need. When he had a girl friend, he would invest his whole life in her--neglecting work, school and friends to be with her. He would impress her with his knowledge of foreign affairs and bask in her admiration. Obviously, she would not admire him for very long but would become tired of his constant attention.

All of these are ways of trying to avoid the anxiety of fate which was symbolized for him in the feeling of being two feet tall. His symptoms were an unrealistic



security. So long as he was sitting in the bar imagining himself to be respected by the other people present, or so long as he was being admired by his girl friend or day-dreaming about being a hero he had a false feeling of being safe.

This analysis also helps to explain why he turned down chances to teach when he needed the money so badly. He had a strong sense of his own helplessness and a fear of failure when he faced a classroom. He gained an unrealistic security by staying home as much as possible and relying on his ability to restrict his spending and on the generosity of his roommate to give him financial security. It was an unrealistic security but he preferred it to the existential anxiety of fate which was so strong when he faced a classroom.

His failure to go to class served the purpose of avoiding failure and, at the same time, it gave him a way of asserting himself slightly against his domineering mother who insisted that he become a teacher.

## 2. UNREALISTIC CERTITUDE

Mrs. Johnson was a beautiful blond in her late twenties. She walked into the living room where her husband and the pastor were talking and sat down. As the minister turned toward her she asked him a question or two about politics, hardly listening to his answers. She

announced that she had taken a couple of drinks to get up her courage. Then, she said to the minister, "You've taken my cause away from me once. You're not going to take it away from me again."

Her cause was rightwing politics. She had just completed Fred Schwartz's school on anti-communism and was involved in a continuing discussion group that had grown out of that school.

The struggle necessary for her to stay in the rightwing was quite apparent. She was basically a very sensitive and compassionate woman. She was hurt every time some rightwing friend made a criticism against the church because, although she had attended church very little during her lifetime, it represented to her the more humane part of life. In fact, it was the pastor's documentation of the falseness of a charge against the church that had made her turn away from the rightwing cause once before.

The hostility of the rightwing was very painful to her. She was friendly toward people without regard to their political beliefs and tried hard to find ways of convincing herself that her rightwing friends didn't really mean it when they made their hostile accusations. Raised as a new deal democrat she tried to convince herself that, somehow, the rightwing now represented the humane thrust that she had, as a child, associated with the new deal.

Her loyalty to the rightwing was somewhat like the plight of the alcoholic who finds the taste of alcohol nauseating but who still insists on drinking alcohol. Much about the rightwing simply went against her grain. It was only with a great deal of effort that she was able to continue participating in it. It is hard to understand why she would put up the effort unless one understands her need for certitude.

Her father, a poor man, had been a personal friend of one of the most famous film directors in Hollywood. She had been quite close to her father and had come to know the film director very well. Approached about becoming an actress she said that what she really wanted was to become a film director. She was told that when she finished college she could have a job as an assistant to the director.

Just before she entered college her father died. While she was in college the film director died--and with him her connections in Hollywood. Upon graduation she married a salesman who came from a wealthy family of lawyers, judges and physicians who looked upon Hollywood entertainers as being somewhat beneath them. The salesman husband felt inferior in their presence because he was "only a businessman" and wanted very much to impress them. So, he objected to his wife's interest in films. Finally, the marriage was not a happy one.

She described her reactions to these events, starting with her father's death, as one of disillusionment. It was not possible, the few times she saw the pastor, to determine the exact nature of the dream or belief that had begun to die with her father's death. But whatever it was, it's gradual death left her more and more empty until she found herself wondering whether there was any purpose to living.

Rightwing politics gave her something to believe in while the hostility and inconsistencies that went with it threatened her with disillusionment again. When the pastor pointed out the falseness of the charge her friends were making against the church, disillusionment predominated and she "lost her cause." But the disillusionment left her feeling depressed and aimless.

The emptiness of her life was more than she could accept into her self-affirmation. It threatened to end in meaninglessness. It also undermined her self-affirmation in regard to fate and guilt. She reported that her feelings of insecurity and of rejection increased with the increased apathy of emptiness.

Her solution was to turn back to the rightwing faith, even though it went against her grain, and to inform the pastor that he was not going to take it away from her again.

She had a certitude. It was an unrealistic certitude. She believed what was hardly believable and doubted what there was little or no reason to doubt. Her rationalizations and excuses were the attempts to patch up the holes in the belief and keep it from falling apart. The pain she obviously suffered showed that she was not altogether successful at believing her own rationalizations.

### 3. UNREALISTIC PERFECTIONISM

Suzy was forty-two years old and was trying to decide whether to get a divorce--from her second husband. She would list all his faults to the counselor and end by talking about how she did not want to be alone. Every couple of weeks or so she would report some kind of crisis in which her husband's lack of consideration and sometimes downright cruelty to her would be demonstrated. These incidents caused her a lot of anguish but analysis showed that she helped to precipitate some of them.

Away from her husband she was "very happy." She worked for a large advertising agency where tensions were high and temperamental people in large supply. She was an ideal "girl Friday." She was well organized and perfectionistic. Furthermore, she had an appetite for work and was quite willing to stay long after closing time.

Most important of all, she was very cheerful all day long. No matter how much the pressure was getting to

other people Suzy could be counted on to be happy. She always had a witty remark to make, was ready to laugh at anyone else's jokes or listen to their troubles. She was, as people told her many times, "like a breath of fresh air," just having her walk into the room seemed to cheer people up.

To some extent this happiness was real. She thoroughly enjoyed her work and, furthermore, it distracted her from the deeper feelings of sadness and turmoil. But the fact that anxiety was just below the surface showed in a slightly forced quality to her cheerfulness and to her resistance to exploring her deeper feelings.

The reason for her symptoms could be seen in her sense of failure and her awareness of her own responsibility for the failure. She had suffered a lifelong sense of inadequacy. She was uncomfortable around other housewives because she felt inferior to them. She preferred the company of men, but she did not relate to them romantically. She treated them more like children--to be taken care of. Her efficiency on her job had this quality of taking care of her bosses. The bosses, in turn, showered her with compliments, saw to it that she was invited to parties where she would meet interesting people--and generally made her feel important and needed. The other women on the job liked her too--partly because she represented no romantic competition to them. She had

settled for this kind of restricted life and, as a result, life seems just to have passed her by.

Her first husband appeared to have simply lost interest and, finally, to have moved out from sheer boredom. She, then, began to date an adman who was really a con artist. He flattered her and wined her and dined her. She fell madly in love with him. After they were married he was out of work a lot of the time and some of the time he spent her money flattering and wining and dining other women.

Suzy was well aware that what she had been getting out of life was not what she wanted out of life. She became aware of this each day when she left her job and realized that she was eager to get home and "take off my girdle" and just enjoy being at home. She realized it when she found herself thinking of excuses to do things for her friends' children.

What she really wanted was a home life with a family of her own. She wanted to be a mother and a wife. She had a deep desire to take care of her own children, to have family activities, to be taken care of by her husband and occasionally to have him take her out to dinner.

Instead, of this she had wasted her life mothering her bosses and being "little miss sunshine" to all and sundry. At forty-two she realized that life was not only passing her by but that, in fact, much of it had already

passed her by and would never be repeated.

She did not like to think about this and had a lot of resistance to going into her deep feelings during the counseling sessions. If the counselor tried to probe into her feelings about not having children she would say wistfully, "I don't know why I never had any children" and, then, quickly change the subject.

One day, however, she had a few drinks before she came to her counseling session and she let down her guard just enough to show what was bothering her. As she put it, "When the first divorce happened I could chalk it up to a mistake. Anybody can make a mistake and marry somebody who is unsuitable. But the second time--I can't fool myself any longer. I've done this to myself."

It was not only the divorce that she had done to herself. She had forfeited the life that she could have had. She had settled for a very restricted life--the life of a well organized efficiency machine, the life of a "little miss sunshine," the life of everybody's crying towel and joke machine. And she was responsible for this. As the realization of this broke through her defenses she said, "I hate myself."

This self-rejection was what she was trying to avoid. She could not accept the responsibility for unlived life into her self-affirmation. She feared that it would lead



to complete self-rejection. So, she developed an unrealistic perfectionism.

One part of her unrealistic perfectionism was the attempt to avoid blame for her forfeited life. So, she tried to find ways to justify the divorce to the therapist in hopes that he would "advise" her to get the divorce. If he would do this she would not be responsible for the decision. This attempt to avoid the decision explained why she would precipitate crises that would put her husband in a bad light, report them to the therapist and, then, change the subject to how much she did not like being alone. The crises were to justify a divorce while the claim that she did not want to be alone was to resolve her of wanting one. If the therapist had advised her that she should get a divorce she could claim that he had done so against her inclination. "But what else could I do?" She would be blameless.

Another aspect of her unrealistic perfectionism was her constant seeking for approval by playing the role of "little miss sunshine" and being the perfect girl Friday. This approval gave her a sense of reassurance. It made her feel that she had not wasted her life--look how much she was needed, look how much sunshine she scattered around, look how much people appreciated her, look how much she enjoyed all of this. In fact, for a little while she wouldn't even feel inadequate. She was the perfect

secretary and a wonderful buddy. But the reassurance was temporary.

Her behavior was an attempt to prove that she was not responsible, that she was not wasting her life and that she was not inadequate. It was an attempt to prove that there was no reason for her to reject herself.

Her confession that she hated herself showed that the attempt wasn't successful. The fact is that she was inadequate (as we all are) and, because she was afraid to face her inadequacy she had been forfeiting her life. And she was responsible. Her perfectionism was an unrealistic perfectionism.

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## CHAPTER XIV

### SYMBOL AND RITUAL

Dr. Tillich has pointed out that symbols participate in the power of that which they symbolize. He makes analogous statements about ritual.

Modern man tends to consider this insight of little value since, as he sees it, he does not participate in rituals nor worry about symbols. These are looked upon as characteristics of the pre-scientific age from which modern man has been delivered.

One of the services that Freud, Jung and others have done for the twentieth century is to show that modern man is as involved in these matters as pre-scientific man was.

The purpose of this chapter is to take a few samples of these from clinical material and show the relationship between them and Tillich's theories.

#### 1. RITUAL

Catherine was estranged from her husband and was trying to establish herself in her new life. The husband wanted a reconciliation but she did not. She wanted him to stay away from her and give her a chance to have "some peace and quiet."

In spite of all this, Catherine went one evening to a bowling alley where she knew her husband would be and

started a conversation with him that she knew would end in an argument. Her husband became exasperated by the argument and told her that she was hopeless and that he did not want to see her again.

At this point she went into the bar of the bowling alley where she let herself get picked up. After a few drinks she ditched the man and went home to spend several hours telling herself that she was a tramp and that she was neurotic and that her case was hopeless. She told herself that she really ought to go to a nearby mental hospital and commit herself.

She was aware of the fact that she had instigated the fight with her estranged husband and that she was being hard on herself by calling herself a tramp because she let a man buy her a drink. (She had carefully avoided any opportunity for a sexual liaison.) She asked the therapist why she had done all this.

The therapist made the guess that somebody had tried to be kind to her during the day before this happened. She said that this was true. A motherly woman at work had been particularly helpful to her. The boss had called her into his office and had told her that, in the few weeks that she had been there, he was pleased with her work and that the other people in the office liked her and that he hoped she was satisfied with the job.

She reported that while the boss was talking to her she became so filled with anxiety that she thought she was going to be ill. She found it difficult to talk and could hardly wait to get out of the office.

Her onset of anxiety was due to her awareness of the possibility of nonbeing in the form of rejection and blame. In her childhood she had tried hard to get close to an aunt who had partially raised her. The aunt would be quite friendly for awhile and, then, reject her. The aunt always blamed the rejection on some flaw in the girl. Any act of friendliness, therefore, was seen by her as a prelude to rejection. Or, to put it in other words, a warm smile or a kind word was a symbol of nonbeing and participated in the power of nonbeing. Such a symbol could cause her to be overwhelmed by anxiety.

She felt that she had to protect herself from this danger by not letting anyone be too friendly with her. But what could she do about the essential unity of individualization and participation? This essential nature made itself felt in the form of a strong desire to break out of her shell and establish some warm human relationships. Furthermore, she recognized that this desire was a commandment for the fulfillment of which she was somehow held responsible. This awareness was expressed in the form of regret that she had not broken out of the shell in the past and an awareness that she had forfeited part of

her life by not doing so. She feared that she would forfeit her life forever if she did not break out of the shell now.

She was caught in a dilemma. If she accepted the offers of friendship she had to face nonbeing in the form of the possibility of rejection (fate) and blame (guilt) and if she didn't she had to face nonbeing in the form of the responsibility of forfeiting her life (guilt). Furthermore, she feared that one more rejection would cause her doubts about the possibility of genuine human relationships to overwhelm her (meaninglessness).

She tried to handle the anxieties of fate and meaninglessness by leaving the potential uncontested. She would not actualize her potential for friendship and, in that way, she could avoid the confrontation with rejection. But this only increased the anxiety of guilt; so, she had to protect herself from this anxiety.

Her ritual, which she used with variations every-time there was danger of too much closeness, was her attempt to solve the problem. By having a fight with her husband and, then, letting herself get "picked up" in a bar she could tell herself that she was a tramp and that she was neurotic. If she could convince herself of these charges she would have her excuse for not actualizing her potential for friendship. After all as a neurotic and a tramp she would not be capable of friendship with such

respectable and normal people. Furthermore, if they really knew that she was a tramp and that she was neurotic they wouldn't want to be friends with her. Thus, she told herself, she was not capable of friendship and nobody would want to make friends with her anyway if they really knew her. So, she had her excuse for rejecting friendship. This was supposed to take care of her guilt.

Fortunately for her, it did not take care of it. The guilt was real and was not to be denied. Fortunately, she also accepted the therapist's interpretation and began trying to handle her guilt by responsibly actualizing her potential "in spite of" the existential anxieties.

Examples of the use of rituals for handling existential anxiety can be found in many different forms. Bob's use of daydreams as a ritual for handling his anxiety of fate has already been mentioned. As he pointed out, it was sometimes impossible for him to get to sleep until he had gone through his ritual two or three times.

Henry had a ritual for handling the anxieties of fate and meaninglessness that were triggered by the bureaucratic stifling of his life on the job. He had a workshop in his garage and every week he would spend an evening or two--and sometimes the entire weekend--working in his workshop. The ritualistic nature of this was demonstrated by the fact that he made things for which he had no use whatever. Making these things gave him a chance

to do something creative. The creativity involved gave him some protection from the sense of meaninglessness that he suffered on his job. The mastery of the materials gave him some relief from the sense of helplessness (fate) that he felt on his job. He simply felt better after having made something in the workshop.

Since his wife interpreted this as a sign of his rejection of her it created a certain amount of friction between them. The matter was brought to the attention of the minister during a pastoral call. His interpretation of it "rang a bell" with the husband. Both husband and wife were able to relax about the whole issue--after all, it was a harmless type of ritual.

The wife, on the other hand, had a ritual for handling her feelings of rejection. It was fairly easy for her to feel rejected and, when she did, she suffered from the anxiety of guilt. She handled this by having coffee klatches with a few friends of her's to whom she would complain about her husband. The friends would support her in her complaints with the result that she would be able to project her guilt feelings onto him. The other friends were, of course, using the coffee klatches for ritualistic purposes of their own.

Although these rituals were relatively harmless neither of them really solved anything and the unresolved



problems of the home did adversely effect the lives of their three children.

Fortunately, rituals can sometimes be effective. Catherine, after a year of therapy began reporting the beginning of the development of a new ritual. She was going with a man who was very understanding and sympathetic. When anxiety began to get to her she would go to him and sit with her head on his shoulder. Sometimes, she would cry, sometimes she would talk, sometimes she would just sit. The ritual allowed for these variations. She reported that a renewed courage and ability to face her problems came to her after she would go through this ritual. It is understandable that this would be so. The ritual communicated to her acceptance by the power of being. The man knew her faults and still accepted her. This communicated not only his own acceptance, it communicated to her the fact that acceptance of her was a possibility. He was the medium through which that possibility was made known to her.

The meaning of a ritual to the person who goes through it can be understood only if one understands how it protects the person from nonbeing and affirms, in whatever limited way, his power to be. Henry's ritual was an act of courage in that in it he affirmed his power to shape a part of life even though it was limited to that part of his life that happened in the workshop. Even Catherine's

early neurotic ritual was partially an act of courage and expressed, partly, her power to be. It expressed her power to pit herself against her husband who represented in her mind the power of nonbeing that had first been transmitted to her through her aunt. It also represented her power to have sexual feelings "in spite of" the nonbeing that was represented by the aunt's disapproval of associations with men.

The ritual, therefore, protected her from the nonbeing with which intimacy threatened her and, at the same time, expressed the power of being by actualizing a very limited intimacy (letting the man buy her a drink). It was, therefore, a mixture of being and nonbeing, of courage and anxiety.

The way in which these elements are present determines the meaning of the ritual. This is true even if the ritual has a generally understood meaning which is different from this.

This can be seen in the case of Mrs. Baker to whom the service of holy communion became such a powerful symbol of nonbeing, devoid of any redeeming power of being, that she could not tolerate the anxiety it aroused in her. For forty years she avoided going to church because of this fact.

The change in the meaning of holy communion came one day when she was thirteen years old. Her mother would not

get out of bed and wouldn't say anything to the daughter. Thinking the mother was sick the daughter went next door to ask a neighbor's help. When the neighbor arrived the mother got out of bed and asked the neighbor and the daughter to be seated at the dining room table. Then, taking some wine and some bread she proceeded to celebrate holy communion with herself in the role of the Christ. When she had finished she went into the kitchen, closed the door and turned on the gas jets on the stove. She was, of course, committed to a mental hospital. Unfortunately, she never recovered.

In this way the service of holy communion, which so represents the power of being "in spite of" nonbeing that it became the central celebration of two civilizations, came to represent for this poor woman the power of nonbeing and of the hopelessness of life in the face of it.

## 2. SYMBOL

The case of Bob has already been discussed. It is worthwhile to note, at this point, some of the symbols that played a part in his life.

In a visualization, or guided daydream, during one of his counseling sessions he went down into the ocean. There he saw king Neptune as a statue seated upon a throne. Nearby swam a shark. As the statue began coming toward him he moved away. But the statue kept coming and was

getting closer to him. When asked if he would like to say something to Neptune he said that he was afraid of him although he did not know why. On the other hand, he felt very friendly toward the shark. He was relieved when the shark swam between him and Neptune and caused Neptune to disappear.

After the visualization was finished the therapist questioned Bob about his friendly feelings toward the shark. Bob revealed that the shark represented strength to him, the power to protect him from this mysterious, not quite alive, Neptune. He also reported that he liked lions, tigers, leopards, alligators and other dangerous animals. He had no use for gentle or friendly animals. His idea of a household pet was an alligator and, in fact, just that week he had refrained from buying an alligator only because he realized that he did not have adequate facilities for taking care of him.

All of these animals represented to him the power of being in the form of strength and protection from the non-being which he saw lurking behind every friendly or tender feeling.

He also was very interested in trees. He could discourse about the various kinds of trees and their characteristics. He enjoyed caring for trees and had made an agreement with his landlord that he could care for the trees on his property and grow some new trees as well. He

felt good in the presence of trees that were strong and tall. He was uncomfortable around trees that seemed to be weak in any way.

All of the animals and trees that he liked were symbols of the power of being to him. He felt "two feet tall" when confronted by nonbeing in the form of fate. As a result he searched for those symbols of strength which appeared to be capable of preserving their being against the strength of the manifestations of fate.

His uneasiness around friendly animals was consistent in his inability to see people in his visualizations. In the visualization described above, Neptune looked like a man but he was a mythical god and, in addition, a statue. In another visualization Bob saw a knight in armor but the knight was not alive. He could move freely but he was not alive. The fact that he was encased in armor was in itself a symbol of his not being quite human. In still another visualization he met a man walking on a bridge but when he approached the man it turned out to be a man-sized cardboard picture which moved with the breeze and was somehow dangerous.

All of these were symbols of nonbeing.

There is an endless variety of ways being and non-being are symbolized in people's lives. Mrs. Stearns, for example, tried to participate in the power of being by eating dip and potato chips. Eating was a ritual with

which she tried to pacify and deny her needs (being) in order to avoid being taken advantage of (nonbeing). But why dip and potato chips?

On being questioned about this she discussed parties and laughter which represented to her the fun and excitement of life. She particularly discussed one series of parties in which she danced frequently with a man who "made her feel like a woman." As a result of these experiences dip and potato chips symbolized the power of being for her--the power to actualize her femininity and to assimilate it into her life.

She also saw the power of being in dogs. In a visualization she saw herself as a little girl sitting under a tree with a dog in her lap. When asked if she would like to say something to the dog she began to cry. In her visualization she hugged the dog and wept. When questioned about the dog she said that dogs would accept a person without making any demands in return. This was her symbol for the grace of God. Only through this symbol was she able to gain any understanding of the meaning of justification by faith.

Tillich says that almost everything in creation has been used as a symbol of the holy. It appears that today with the loss of power in the symbols that have been traditional in our culture the ground of being is manifest in almost any piece of creation that is handy. Of course,

these manifestations are fragmentary and, unfortunately, they are frequently received in a distorted way.

One of the tasks of therapy is participation in these symbols in the hope that, through them, the power of being will grasp the counselee and give him the chance to be whole again.

## CHAPTER XV

### BEING, NONBEING AND COURAGE

To the onlooker the experience of being grasped ecstatically by the power of being is sometimes dramatically presented in such forms as deep sobs or happy laughter while at other times it is discernable only as a slightly perceptible relaxation. Sometimes it is seen as a struggle.

With Dorothy it was a struggle that was never satisfactorily resolved. As she sat in the counselor's office her eyes swam with tears which she struggled to hold back. When she spoke she was obviously trying to change the subject. The therapist urged her to say what she really felt. What she really felt was a sense of need so overwhelming that she saw herself as a little girl lost in a frightening world looking for someone to take care of her. But to express this need would be to affirm her essential being. This would include an affirmation of the unity of dynamics and form. These were split in her life in that form allowed for no sex feelings that were not under the total control and at the complete disposal of her husband. A simple thing like watching a movie in which a good looking actor appeared was enough to create hours of chaotic argument in her home.

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The anxiety that was triggered by these arguments was so overwhelming to her that she did not dare affirm the unity of dynamics and form in regard to sex. And to avoid any possibility of this she could not let herself be aware of needs.

She was filled with regrets for having thrown so much of her life away denying her needs. She feared that life would continue to pass her by and that she would die without ever having lived. She also feared that she had so messed up her life that there was no chance for her to come alive.

At this moment, however, the spiritual presence was grasping her. The power of being expressed itself in a strong awareness of her needs. Her eyes swam with tears and her voice trembled when she spoke. She was experiencing her essential nature. This experience was her acceptance by the power of being.

She had only to accept this acceptance to experience, however fragmentarily, the overcoming of her existential estrangement and the healing of her life. But to do this she would have to affirm herself (that is, to express her needs) "in spite of" the insecurity triggered by her arguments with her husband.

Unwilling to do this she choked back her feelings and, in a few minutes, was "back in control of herself." She returned home to continue the mutual manipulation by

which she and her husband tormented each other. Soon after that she stopped counseling.

Fortunately, not every offer of new life is turned down. Margie's story will illustrate a happier outcome. Margie was a very attractive divorcee whose ultimate concern seemed to be dating. Actually dating was a concrete form of her ultimate concern which was the avoidance of guilt.

At one session she mentioned her son's problem at school. Then, she discussed the very rough time she had suffered when her son was a baby, after which she discussed her son's teachers, her former husband's faults and the difficulties she had encountered in trying to get a new start after her divorce. When she stopped, the counselor made the obvious observation that she sounded as if she were trying to convince somebody that she was not responsible for her son's difficulties at school.

She reacted to this by becoming more defensive. She said she could not possibly be totally responsible, that her husband must be partly responsible, etc. The therapist agreed that she was not totally responsible but wondered why she was so desperate to prove it.

She reported that her physician had told her that her son's inability to concentrate in school was due to maternal neglect rather than from physical problems as she had hoped. This assertion had confronted her with

her inadequacy and failure to such an extent that she had gone home and locked herself in her bedroom and lay upon the bed trembling and weeping.

In the counseling session she could discuss objectively her neglect of her children, and the fact that the reason for this neglect was that she could not stand being around her children because when she was around them she felt so keenly her own failure as a mother. But, even while discussing this objectively, she still could not bring herself to admit any responsibility for the effect this had on her children.

It was obvious, however, that she was not successful at denying the guilt. Her body was tense, she was fighting back tears and she oscillated between anger and apology. Nonbeing in the form of guilt was tormenting her. It was this that had caused the disintegration of her family and of her own life. She did not dare affirm the essential unity of individualization and participation. She feared that participation in the lives of her children would result in the loss of what little integration she was able to maintain by her unrealistic perfectionism. The perfectionism consisted of denying her guilt, blaming other people and keeping a busy social schedule which saved her from being reminded of her failures by the children's presence and, at the same time, secured a lot of reassurance from the attentiveness and compliments of her boyfriends.

The threat of nonbeing was obvious to the counselor. The presence of the power of being was not so obvious. However, when the therapist suggested to Margie that somewhere within herself she was aware that she could accept some of the responsibility for her son's problems without being destroyed by it, Margie said that she had, for some time, felt that she was getting closer to doing exactly that. She wasn't sure what she meant by this but she was somehow aware of the possibility of affirming herself in spite of her guilt.

She took courage from this awareness of the power of being and began to confess her responsibility, first in words, then in great sobs. For quite some time the only sound in the counseling room was that of her groaning and weeping. When she had finished she found herself relaxed and hopeful. The effect, however, was not merely a temporary relaxation. At the next counseling session she reported that she had spent more time than usual with her children--canceling a couple of dates in order to do so. Thinking back on it she realized that she had done this, not because she felt guilty but because she wanted to. Furthermore, she had enjoyed the time she had spent with them.

What had happened was that, to some extent, her estrangement from her essential nature had been overcome. She had been able to affirm the essential unity of, for

example, individualization and participation. So she was able to participate in her children's lives and find this to be an integrative experience for her instead of a disintegrative experience. The ability to assimilate the children's reactions into her centered self was not destroyed by the guilt of her responsibility for their unhealthy reactions.

This overcoming of her existential estrangement was fragmentary, to be sure, but it was no less real or significant for that reason.

Looking at what happened from another angle one might say that the trends and motivations of her life were shaken so that the avoidance of guilt was no longer her ultimate concern. It was replaced by the new being--made concrete in her own growth and in the growth of her children. Again it must be said that this was not absolute. But neither was it insignificant. Even though she tended to go back to the avoidance of guilt as her ultimate concern she was not able to hold firmly to it. She had experienced a better life and it had left a permanent residue which led her toward the development of a new center within herself.

A result of such change is courageous living. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that courageous living is a part of the change as well as a result of it. Such courageous living is illustrated by a case that has

already been described--that of Mrs. Harley. She enrolled in nurse's training, became a nurse and began to enjoy the cultural activities in which she had always wanted to participate.

These activities did not preclude anxiety. Anxiety was still present and, in fact, was even stimulated by these very activities. But the anxiety did not dominate her life causing her to escape into pathological anxiety as she had done in the past. Instead she accepted the anxiety into her life as a normal, though uncomfortable, part of her life and carried on courageously "in spite of" it. Or to put this in other words, nonbeing was present but did not prevail against being. It was courageously accepted into the affirmation of being.

As a result of this Mrs. Harley developed a confidence that was greater than that of friends of her's whose self-affirmation did not include so much nonbeing. Tillich's idea that the self-affirmation is stronger the more nonbeing it can accept into itself is well illustrated here. In concrete terms Mrs. Harley developed more social and cultural poise and sophistication, more self-confidence and became better dressed than people whom she had once seen (rightly) as her social and cultural superiors.

In the case of Pearl the courageous living took the form of doing such things as introducing her boyfriend to her family and friends (thus committing herself), letting

him pay the check when they went out to dinner, and letting herself enjoy her sexual feelings. Eventually, her courageous living included marrying the boyfriend.

In the lives of Pearl and Mrs. Harley courage overcame anxiety--to say that it overcame the anxiety is not to say that it destroyed it but that it prevailed against it. Anxiety continued to exist but was not able to dominate their lives. Courage was predominate. As courage was exercised confidence increased and anxiety became less and less of a problem. To a lesser, but still significant degree, this was true also in the life of Margie.

In Dorothy's life, on the other hand, anxiety prevailed against courage. The result was a life dominated by the destructive arguments and manipulation that were a part of her pathological anxiety. One who sees this can only hope that she will, in the future, begin accepting the acceptance of the power of being so that her life can change from one characterized by anxiety to one characterized by courage.

## CHAPTER XVI

### ESSENCE AND EXISTENCE

The life that is characterized by courage is also characterized by the overcoming of the estrangement from essence. This healing is always fragmentary and, in a way, temporary. To say that it is temporary is to say that it will be contested over and over again in that again and again man is called upon to decide between courage and anxiety. In each decision of courage the estrangement of existence from essence is overcome. In some of these times of kairos new centers of the personality are formed. These new centers, without contradicting the fragmentary nature of the healing, do create a certain stability in which new life patterns emerge which are characterized more by healing than were the old life patterns. In this sense the life characterized by courage is also characterized by the overcoming of existential estrangement.

This is illustrated by the case of Jim. Jim was 39 years old, fairly happy with his marriage, active in his church and community. He was respected for his work as a social worker with a community organization whose purpose was the prevention of juvenile delinquency. His work with delinquents and potential delinquents was very satisfying to him and seemingly effective.



There was another side to Jim's life, however, that caused him a lot of anguish. Periodically, he would feel a compulsion to go to another part of the city and look through nudist magazines or watch a pornographic movie or attend a striptease show. Sometimes at night after his wife had gone to bed he would write a pornographic story which he would carefully hide. The next morning he would read it on his way to work and, then, dispose of it by putting it into a public trash can.

This behavior caused him a great deal of anxiety. He lived in fear that somebody would find out about this part of his life. He imagined that somebody might see him while he was thumbing through a nudist magazine or watching a pornographic movie. He imagined that a custodian might find the pornographic story he had thrown into the trash can and that it might be traced to him. He imagined himself being embarrassed as this was spread around his office and his community; he even feared that he might lose his job. But in spite of all of this he would periodically throw caution to the winds and engage in these activities.

During the counseling sessions he would criticize himself severely for this behavior, comparing himself unfavorably with other people who did not indulge in such activities. When the therapist pointed out that, in fact, some of his friends did read girlie magazines and attend topless bars he would say that they were not compulsive

about it. It quickly became obvious that he needed to castigate himself for these activities and that, in fact, the need to castigate himself was one of the reasons he engaged in the activities.

If the counselor had seen in this a masochistic need for punishment, however, he would have missed the whole point. Jim repeatedly tried to make sure the counselor didn't get the impression that it was worse than it really was. He was concerned that the counselor not have a low opinion of him and gave the overall impression that he would not particularly welcome any judgmental statements from the counselor. He did not want the counselor to punish him but to understand and accept him.

Then why the judgmental attitude toward himself?

It was all part of a ritual designed to avoid the existential anxiety of guilt. In fact, as he began to see, much of his behavior, including his choice of a profession and his statements during the counseling sessions, was an attempt to avoid the anxiety of guilt. It was as if he were spending his life saying, "Don't blame me," or, "I am not responsible."

The guilt problem arose because he was unable to accept responsibility for his sexual feelings. His grandfather had been a missionary who was rather proud of his role in getting his primitive converts to adopt western style clothing in place of the scanty clothing that they

were accustomed to wearing. Jim's father had become a judge and saw his job as that of upholding the morality of society through the enforcement of its laws. He frequently made speeches on the decline of public morals.

Jim was expected by his family to become a minister. Although this was never discussed with him and no pressure was placed on him he felt that he had disappointed the family by not choosing the ministry. His decision to enter social work and to concentrate on problems of juvenile delinquency was, in part, an attempt to handle his guilt feelings about not having entered the ministry by choosing a suitable substitute.

He was unable to find a similarly creative way to handle his guilt feelings about his sexual impulses. He had been married twice and both wives had been frigid. Between marriages he had had an affair--with a frigid woman.

Understandably he had a feeling that something was missing, that life was passing him by. His responsibility for this was a part of his guilt but to accept this responsibility he would also have to accept responsibility for his sexual feelings. He was not able to do this. In the face of the strong streak of victorianism that ran through his family background, sexual feelings confronted him with a threat of rejection. To avoid this he rejected his sexual feelings. Thus, every time the feelings arose they were a reminder that he was a sexual man and caused

him to reject himself.

It was to avoid this self-rejection that he engaged in his pornographic rituals. They gave him a way to express his sexuality and, at the same time, to disown it. His ritual supplied sexual stimulation and some gratification through fantasy. But it was an outlet of which he could not approve. His disapproval was a way of keeping intact his self-image as a highly moral person. He was, after all, not the kind of immoral man who condoned such things.

This explained why he was continually trying to make sure the therapist did not get a bad impression of him. The purpose of the pornographic ritual was not to get himself punished but to exonerate himself for having sex feelings--while at the same time allowing some expression of those feelings.

It is not hard to see that under the impact of non-being and of the resulting anxiety (primarily guilt) the unity between dynamics and form was disrupted. Dynamics represented by sexual impulses was in conflict with form represented by the internalized prohibitions of his family tradition. The only way he could affirm the essential unity of dynamics and form was by acknowledging the legitimacy of his sexual feelings. To do this would make it necessary for him to grow--that is, to change the form. But to do this would make him responsible for the changes--some of which would inevitably be unwise. It would also

make him responsible for those times of chaos between the destruction of old form and the construction of new.

He could not accept this responsibility, and in the counseling session he repeatedly stated his belief that the old form was basically valid. In fact, his self-castigation after his pornographic adventures was in effect an assertion that the old form was valid.

But the old form did not allow for a man to harbor a secret desire to have an extramarital affair. And that is exactly what Jim had a desire to do. Nor was there any way for Jim to keep himself from having these desires. The fact is that in his bachelorhood he had lived within the rather restricted form he had been taught. Then, when he married he found that he had chosen a frigid woman--which was more in accordance with the form he had been taught than he realized. His affair between marriages and his second marriage were both with frigid women.

Not only was he sexually unsatisfied but he was unsatisfied, at a deep level, with his whole life. He wanted to find what was missing. This led him to have a desire for an affair. An affair was one of the possibilities that his imagination raised in answer to the question that was being asked in the depth of his being.

It was a possibility, however, that he could not allow himself to consider seriously. It was a potential that, according to his form, had to remain uncontested.

For not only did the form deny him the affair, it denied his right even to want it.

Dynamics and form were, then, inevitably in conflict. Dynamics raised in his imagination the possibility of having an affair while form denied him the right to consider such a possibility.

The result was the self-destructive pornographic activity. This was most unfortunate. If he could but affirm the essential unity of dynamics and form, the result would be the self-creative development of new form. But as he entered therapy he was not successfully affirming this essential unity. The self-destructiveness was the result.

Disunity and conflict were present in the other polarities as well. The conflict between individualization and participation showed itself in his inability to participate fully in his marriage. His guilt feelings resulted in his criticizing his wife and picking fights with her. These served as guilt-reducing rituals. They also prevented him from being able to accept her as she was. He denied the role of participation.

At the same time he denied individualization. He was unable to suggest to her that they had a sexual problem. The form he had been taught did not allow him to complain about her frigidity. This was enforced by the fact that his failure to complain was another way he handled his guilt feelings.

In addition to this is the obvious fact that he could hardly participate fully in his marriage at the same time he was preoccupied about his pornographic activities. Neither could he participate fully in his pornographic activities when he was preoccupied with worry about the problems which that participation might create in the other areas of his life.

The result of all this was a certain amount of disintegration. His life was pulled first in this way and then in that way. He was unable to integrate all of his activities into a meaningful whole.

This disintegration was unnecessary. If he could have affirmed the essential unity of individualization (himself as a sexual man) and participation (his marriage as a legitimate area of sexuality) there could have been integration. He could have sacrificed the possibilities offered by the affair that tempted him and have concentrated his efforts on trying to make of his marriage as satisfying a marriage as possible. But he could not sacrifice the affair until he could consider it. And, under the impact of guilt he could not seriously consider it. So, he continued to be pulled by it with the result that it continued to disrupt his life and cause disintegration.

There was also disunity in the polarity of freedom and destiny. The disunity showed itself not only in the

compulsive nature of his pornographic activities but also in the element of compulsion that was present in the duty bound nature of some of his participation in his family life and in his civic activities. At the same time the element of freedom that was present in these activities was of an arbitrary nature--that is, the decisions were made without due regard for his welfare and his needs; or to put this in other words, without due regard for his destiny.

A change came in Jim's life when he was able to accept himself as a sexual man. During one of the counseling sessions he was able, under the impact of the power of being, to admit his dissatisfaction with the old form and even to admit that he enjoyed the pornographic activities. Gone was the claim of sexual innocence that the old form demanded of him. He was a man with sexual impulses which demanded new form. The potential unity of dynamics and form could no longer be ignored.

The following week the pretense of innocence was sacrificed. He asked, in a concrete way, a girl for a date. She accepted the date but later called him to tell him she had changed her mind and didn't think it would be very wise for them to see each other. He was relieved when she broke the date. But, at the same time, he was disappointed. In fact, it was a rather shaking experience. For the next hour he was unable to get it off his mind and he generally felt, as he put it, "shook up." When he left the office



to go to lunch he got into his car and, instead of going immediately, sat for awhile in his car weeping quietly both for the loss of innocence and for the life that he had forfeited over the years.

In this experience he accepted responsibility for his sexuality and in other words he was able to affirm himself "in spite of" the anxiety of guilt--guilt for having spent much of his life denying his sexuality and guilt for having tried to actualize his sexuality in destructive, disintegrative and self-profanizing ways.

The following day his wife was sick and it was necessary for him to stay home and take care of her. This had happened several times before during his years of marriage. Each of the other times he had been mildly annoyed, and had been irritable all day. This time he was not at all annoyed. In fact, he enjoyed taking care of her and felt quite close to her. Once during the day he spontaneously told her how much she meant to him--something he had not done in years.

In this experience the estrangement from his essential nature was dramatically, if fragmentarily, overcome. To put it in other words, he was able to affirm the essential unity of the ontological polarities in spite of their existential disunity. For example form was still in conflict with dynamics in that his marriage did not offer him the complete satisfaction that his sexuality

needed. Furthermore, the taboos and values that were a part of form (conscience) did not give him the kind of guidance that was adequate for his sexuality. But as he now saw it, new values and taboos could be developed that would offer more adequate guidance. Furthermore, the marriage could be changed to make it more satisfying sexually. So, potentially dynamics and form were in unity.

He was able to affirm this potential or essential unity and, therefore, could accept his sexuality and work toward the improvement of his marriage and of his value system.

He was also able to affirm the essential unity of individualization and participation. Because of this he was able to sacrifice the pretense of innocence. Upon sacrificing this pretense the unity of this polarity was, in fact, approximated. He was able to be himself, a sexual man, and at the same time participate in his marriage. He was no longer pulled willy nilly toward the pornographic activities and back again toward respectability. By participating, as the sexual man that he was, in his marriage, his life was integrated. He could, in other words, assimilate participation in his marriage into his integration. He had not, of course, been able to assimilate the pornographic activities into the whole of his life. They had remained a disrupting influence that prevented integration. Now, they were no longer able to

dominate his life and integration was stronger than disintegration.

He was also able to affirm the essential unity of freedom and destiny. That is to say, he was able to see the possibility of making decisions within the givens (marriage, psychological conditioning, professional realities, etc.) of his life--decisions that were for his benefit and personal fulfillment. The result was an awareness of his own dignity. As he explained, there was nothing tawdry and cheap about any of this (including the attempt to have the date). The attempted date was quite a contrast to the pornographic activities in which he experienced his own smallness and cheapness. His reaction to this whole experience was more one of being deeply moved and of a sense of the holiness and dignity of life.

To sum up, he affirmed the essential unity of dynamics and form, and the result was growth; he affirmed the essential unity of individualization and participation, and the result was integration; he affirmed the essential unity of freedom and destiny, and the result was self-transcendence.

Jim's problems were not all solved by this. It proved to be a high point that soon passed. He continued to start fights with his wife as a way of relieving his guilt feelings and he soon stopped showing much interest in trying to make his marriage work better.

There was, however, permanent change so far as the pornographic activities were concerned. He no longer was bothered by the compulsive need to engage in them. Several months after the above experience he reported that only once since the experience had he engaged in such activities. This time he had happened to be around some nudist magazines which he thumbed through. He did not feel a compulsive need to do so nor did he feel a need to berate himself afterward. He felt, in other words, that this was something he needed neither to seek out nor to avoid. He was simply free of the problem.

This success resulted from his sacrifice of the innocence that he had tried to maintain. He now could accept himself as a sexual man.

He was not, however, willing to sacrifice the possibility of having an affair. This remained a possibility. He reported that he did nothing to actualize the possibility except in his fantasy. An analysis of these fantasies showed that they had the same pattern of indulgence followed by punishment that had shown itself in the pornographic activities. Fortunately, the punishment was not in the form of self-disapproval, as had been the case with the pornographic activities. Now, the punishment was in the form of some kind of intervention (the girl turned him down, somebody saw them together and they became afraid and backed out, etc.) that prevented a sustained

affair. Perhaps it is not accurate to call this punishment. It is really intervention whose purpose was to prevent him from actualizing the potential.

He was not, however, willing to sacrifice the possibility of an affair and commit himself to his marriage. He said that he might, if the opportunity offered itself, go through with the affair and he didn't want to give up the possibility. The possibility remained as unsacrificed potential creating disruption in his marriage. The possibility of a better marriage, on the other hand, remained uncontested potential which also tended to disrupt his life.

The hope of becoming worthy of his family's approval by not having sexual feelings had, however, been sacrificed. His sexuality had been accepted "in spite of" the anxiety of guilt. So, the pornographic activity was no longer necessary. He could handle his sexual feelings by fantasizing about an affair instead of by going through pornographic rituals. There had, in other words, been healing even though the healing was less complete than the therapist would have liked to have seen.

At this point Jim terminated counseling.

Jim's case illustrates existential estrangement and the fragmentary healing of that estrangement. One can only hope that Jim will, like Mrs. Harley, Pearl and thousands of others who make up what St. Paul called the "cloud of

witnesses," accept the acceptance when he is again grasped by the power of being, and that his life will become still more dominated by growth, integration and self-transcendence.

## CHAPTER XVII

### CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated, to a limited extent, the relationship between Tillich's ontological concepts and psychotherapy. Part I set forth those parts of Tillich's theories which are particularly relevant to psychotherapy. Part II explored the relationship between these and the basic ideas of a selected group of psychotherapists.

There are differences, with each psychotherapist, in the approach taken. For example, in discussing Horney, a section was devoted to pointing out the aspect of sin that she emphasizes, while in the chapter on Freud this feature is dealt with briefly in connection with another issue. In the chapters on Freud, Horney and May, the ontological elements were a major concern. This was not the case in the chapters on Dollard and Miller and on Berne.

The reason for these differences is that it was not the purpose of the study to evaluate these systems as systems. The purpose was to point out the relationships between these systems and Tillich's thought. Therefore, there was no reason to set up a group of criteria derived from Tillich's approach and then to apply them to each of the other approaches. Instead, each psychotherapist was looked upon as a creative writer whose theories should be

viewed as having value in themselves. Starting, then, with the psychotherapist's theories, comparisons and contrasts with Tillich's concepts were made. Differences in the issues covered in each chapter demonstrate the comprehensive range of Tillich's thought. It is rather amazing that the insights of one man should be such as to encompass and even expand the basic insights of such a wide range of other thinkers. This study does not by any means exhaust the possibilities of this type of analysis. For example, the psychology of Alfred Adler can be understood as combining the ontological polarity of individualization and participation with the existential anxiety of fate and death. Hence, the feelings of inferiority and the concern for power. Of course, the thought of Karen Horney does the same thing, except that her emphasis on fate and death is not so strong as it is with Adler. Her concept of basic anxiety is vague enough in its application to leave room for the other anxieties. Freud's emphasis, on the other hand, is on the existential anxiety of guilt.

Part III of the study demonstrated the clinical validity of Tillich's concepts by the use of case material from the lives of people who had been in psychotherapy with a therapist whose orientation is primarily Tillichian.

This study points up the need for two further studies. One such study is that of a Tillichian analysis of myths, symbols and rituals. This study should cover



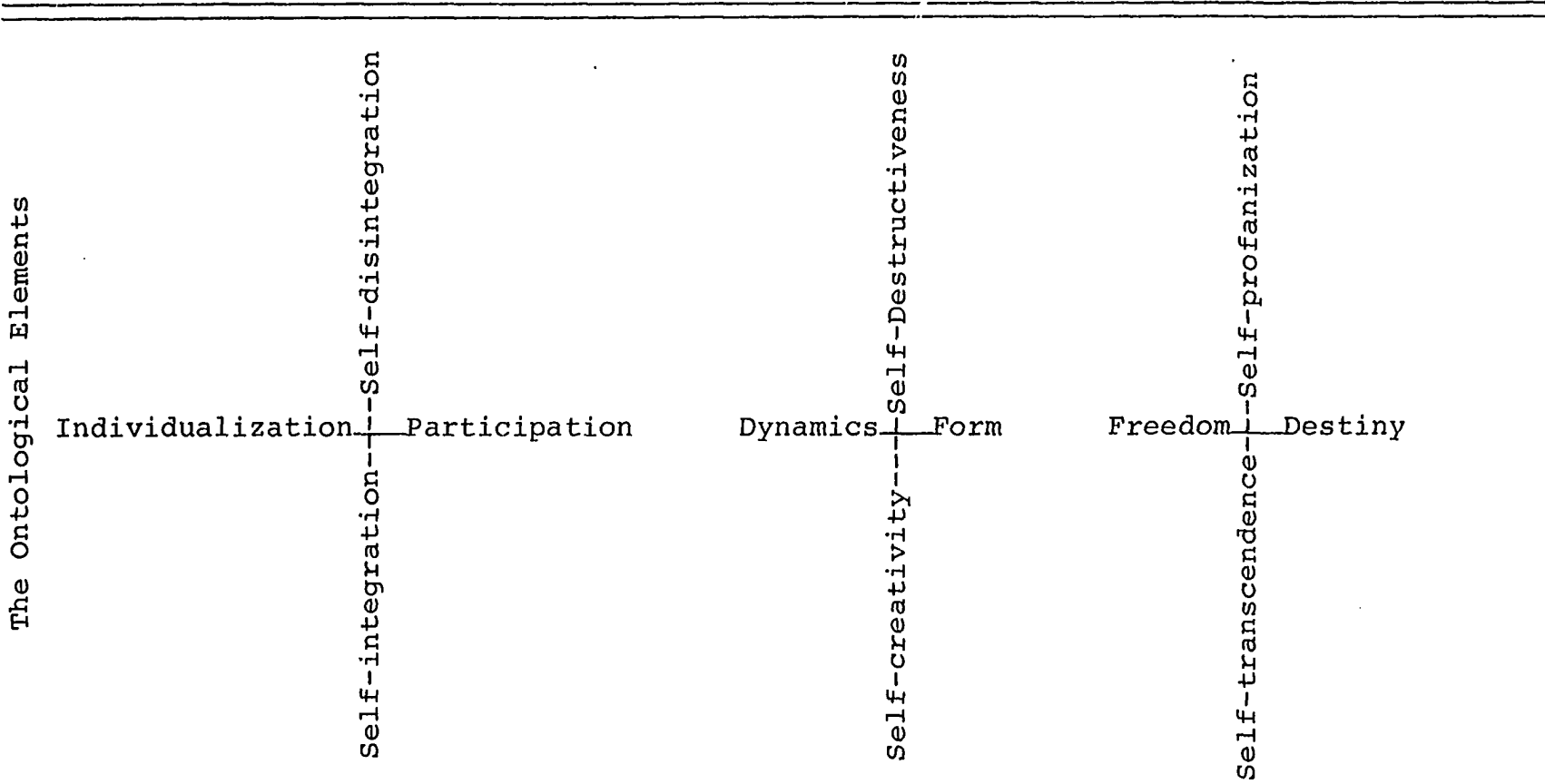
both the personal and the collective; it should delve both into world cultural history and into the personal dreams, fantasies and behavior patterns of individuals in psychotherapy. The other study needed is the building of a system of therapy developing out of Tillich's insights on existential and pathological anxieties and of their relationships.

This study has served its purpose by offering an alternative to the widespread practice among psychotherapists of taking some one valuable insight and trying to make it universal, with very little idea of its relationship to other valuable insights. This practice has resulted in certain psychotherapeutic approaches being made where others should have been. It has resulted in troubled people leaving therapy without being helped because the therapist's particular slant did not apply in their cases and because the therapist did not know where to look for guidance.

It has been demonstrated that various schools of psychotherapy are not so much contradictory as they are different aspects of an underlying unity. This should not be so surprising since they all deal with some aspect of man and with one part or another of man's predicament. A clear and comprehensive ontology, an understanding of the nature of man and of the conflict in which he finds himself, is a prospective guide to the psychotherapist as he tries

to help the troubled person who has come to him in the hope of finding wholeness.

FIGURE 1  
BEING  
THE LIFE PROCESSES



## FIGURE 2

## NONBEING

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THE EXISTENTIAL ANXIETIES		THE PATHOLOGICAL ANXIETIES
<u>Relative</u>	<u>Absolute</u>	
Fate	Death	Unrealistic Security
Emptiness	Meaninglessness	Unrealistic Certitude
Guilt	Condemnation	Unrealistic Perfectionism

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FIGURE 3

	Ontological Polarity	Aspect of Sin	Existential Anxiety
Freud	Dynamics and Form	Concupiscence	Guilt
Horney	Individuali- zation and Participa- tion	Hubris	Fate
May	Freedom and Destiny		

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